

BLARGE: Block/Charge Double Foul Call

A drive or move to the basket may result in contact between the offensive and defensive player. While Refereeing the Defense is one of the pillars of basketball officiating, the official must determine if the defensive player has established initial, legal guarding position: two feet on the floor, in bounds, facing the opponent. The defensive player may move to maintain legal guarding position-laterally and backwards, just not forward or obliquely while also maintaining his own vertical plane (POV-Principal of Verticality). If contact does occur, then the basketball official goes to work.

The official must determine if the contact between A and B is illegal, a Charge by A or a Block by B, or incidental contact where no advantage or disadvantage or rough play to either player has resulted from this contact.

This discussion invokes Men's NCAA Rules and CCA Mechanics.

In the CCA Men's Basketball Officiating Manual, 2008-2009, Section 1.1 Block/Charge Calls p. 20 and Section 1.2 Drives to the Basket p. 21, jurisdiction to determine this call is levied upon the Lead official to have primary coverage if the contact occurs within the Free Throw Lane Lines; however, if case of double whistles, the outside official may take this call as he might have the best look.

Hence, there might be an indeterminate time frame where one official may call and signal "Block" while the other official calls and signals "Charge" nearly simultaneously. Hence, a "BLARGE" may result.

A Blarge is a Double Foul and must be processed as such. It would be incorrect to allow one official's call to override or set aside the others. A discussion of the four types of Blarge Double Foul scenarios: Player and Team Control, Team Control and the two examples of this type of double foul following a FGA where there is loss of team control, will be addressed in this essay.

To avoid a Blarge, by convention the Center and Trail officials are schooled to hold their preliminary signals. That is, they might sound their whistle and stop the clock to signal a foul, but do not add the block or charge signal...hesitating to ensure that indeed the Lead has come up with the call as affirmed by instant eye contact between the Lead and outside calling official. In some situations, it might be the outside official (Center or Trail) who takes this play. This mechanic should always be included in the official's Pre-Game Meeting to help ensure excellent communication, cohesiveness and crew dynamics.

Administering a Blarge:

Player Control, dribbling moving (pivoting) and contact occurs: by rule in any double foul situation, both A is charged with a personal foul and B would be charged with a personal foul. The ball is administered at the Point of Interruption (POI) and would be given back to A at the spot nearest to where the foul was called, with no reset of the shot clock.

Team Control (an airborne passer, an interrupted dribble play, a throw in, etc.) when player A makes contact with the defender B. Since A is still in Team Control when the double foul was called, again A would retain possession as they are still in Team Control. Under POI, the ball would be put in play at the closest spot to where the foul occurred, with no reset of the shot clock.

After the release of the ball for a FGA and a Blarge occurs, there is loss of Team Control. With no TC, if A's FGA is successful, POI B would entitle B to a throw in from a non-designated spot along the end line.

If the FGA is not successful and a Blarge of occurs after the release, since there is no TC, administration of this double foul would call for the Alternating Possession (AP) arrow- POI –at a designated spot nearest to where the foul occurred, with a reset of the shot clock.

Please refer to the 2009 NCAA Basketball Rule Book: 4.53.1.d for POI, 4-3.3.6 for Team Control and 7-5.8,9 for Double Foul POI indications. Also, please review the 2009 NCAA Basketball Case Book, p. 39 A.R. 95 for Double Foul play administration and pp.69, 70 A.R. 172 for Blarge specific plays.

Blarge Management Key Points: Have a thorough pre-game. Outside officials hold preliminary signals. Know the various scenarios for double fouls. Work for consistent communication and optimal crew chemistry and dynamics.