

Coach Conference at the Table

How should the conference be handled when the coach comes to the table? What are a few helpful ways to handle the difficult coach during a heated situation?

1. Remember, it is important to approach all conferences in the same manner.
 - Don't assume the worst, and expect a screaming coach.
 - You need to handle yourself in a calm, patient controlling manner.
 - Keep in mind you are the official, and the only person in control of the entire situation.
 - This process starts by instructing the wrestlers to stay inside the 10-foot center circle,
 - If either or both leave the 10' circle it is unsportsmanlike conduct; make the call
2. Then walk to the scorer's table to meet the coach.
 - While moving to the table it is important to collect your thoughts, and replay the last few moments of the match in your head.
 - When you reach the table, turn and stand to keep the wrestlers in your vision.
 - Look the coach direct in the eyes, and **DON'T SAY A WORD!**
 - Listen to what he has to discuss.
 - Part of defusing a potentially heated situation, is not to put fuel on the fire.
 - By that we mean, don't give him new and more information to argue with.
 - If there is some hesitation, then ask him in a calm, polite, professional manner "Coach, you called me to the table, what can I do for you?"
 - This beginning may be enough to defuse the possible hot situation.
 - As you listen, formulate and deliver a calm, clear, concise answer to his question.

 - Especially the criteria of the rule you applied to make the decision.
 - Do not let this become a question and answer session.
 - Keep it brief, then do one of two, possibly three things;
 - Thank him and ask him to return to coach's corner or
 - Thank him, remind him he is not allowed to question judgment, and inform him of the warning for misconduct. Then ask him to return to the coach's corner, and
 - Instruct the scorer to record a warning for misconduct on Coach.
 - If during the exchange, or at the conclusion he is acting in an unsportsmanlike manner it is important to exercise the unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and deduct the team point,
 - The last resort is a flagrant misconduct call on the coach.
 - Return to the center of the mat and promptly resume the match.
 - The AR remains in the 10 ft. circle w/ the wrestlers.
 - The AR also prevents the wrestlers from leaving the circle as instructed.

Remember these five thoughts.....

1. The coach has the right to a conference and is heard at the table, while you have the duty to grant his request and listen to his questions or concerns.
2. Be APPROACHABLE ... LISTEN ... EXPLAIN ... THEN RESTART THE MATCH.
3. Be polite, professional, direct, confident and consistent.
4. **Know this;** a referee distinguishes himself/herself by how he/she handles the tough ones.
5. Do not tolerate verbal abuse or unsportsmanlike conduct in any form.

The referee must be in control of the match. Do not allow a coach to become an embarrassment or belligerent. Do not allow a coach to harass the scorer's table and the workers, they are your team; protect them. Only one coach per school may conference at any one time.
