** PITTSBURGH ELITE OFFICIATING CAMPS - OFFICIAL NCAA CORRESPONDENCE** 

**ARGUMENTATIVE COACHES**

It takes a minimum of two people to have an argument. If one person chooses not to participate, that leaves the second party blustering in the wind.

It’s not an easy thing to not argue. In fact, it takes more mental toughness, emotional control and good old-fashioned restraint than it does to go on the offensive and fire when fired upon. But if you can train yourself to remain above the fray when a player or coach desperately wants to go nose-to-nose with you, you’ll be a better, more confident and more respected official.

Before we get into how to not argue, let’s make it perfectly clear that nothing said or recommended from this point forward is intended as a substitute for dealing with a problem head-on and using any and all tools in your arsenal to manage that problem. When a participant clearly steps over the line when trying to goad you into an argument, that’s another animal and you should deal with that appropriately.

To sidestep an oncoming argument, you should deal with the aggressor in a positive, assertive manner. Letting people know they are valued, respected and that their opinions matter sets up a situation for positive conflict resolution. Here are some suggestions for taking control of a conflict before it turns into an argument:

1. Let the other person talk – and don’t interrupt.

2. Using your own words, repeat the problem back to the coach or player.

3. Don’t debate judgments.

4. Limit discussion only to the most recent call.

5. Remain assertive and decisive.

6. If you can help it, don’t engage in any discussion when you’re very angry.

7. When discussing problems, focus on solutions.

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