

## **Wisdom of a Wednesday (on a Thursday)**

### **October 15, 2020**

I hope that this WOW finds you all and all your loved ones doing well.

### **Back on Deck**

Saturday, I had the great fortune of being back on deck watching referees work an intra-squad scrimmage at California Baptist University. I felt it was important to share the experience with everyone since there are so few opportunities at this time. I want to give a HUGE thanks to Coach Rosa for inviting referees and allowing me to be on deck, to the team for doing what they had to in order to make this possible, and to the staff for being so diligent and working to keep us all safe.

The intra-squad was to resemble, as closely as possible, a real game. About a week out, Coach Greenawalt reached out to our referee group with the protocol we were to follow upon arriving to campus:

- At the campus gate, show the security that we had face coverings and be prepared to show identification
- Once on campus, wear face coverings at all times (while whistling, referees were exempted)
- The athletic trainer would meet us and walk us through their screening protocol
  - At this time, the protocol included health questions and a temperature check
  - We were reminded to social distance at all times
- After being cleared by the AT we were able to continue to the pool deck
- On the deck, there were only necessary personnel to run the scrimmage
- The referees were provided with a secure area to change separate from the athletes
- CBU provided the referees with radios to use
  - Referees used their own ear pieces

Both referees treated the game as if it were a real game:

- Checked the course
- Talked with the table
- Greeted the coaches
- Performed a nail check
- Held a captains meeting

It was as close to a “normal” game as it could have been. Were we all a little rusty? Yes, we all were, but the feeling of being back on deck, doing what we love was fantastic.

The two teams were introduced. A prayer was said. The national anthem was played. The ball was dropped. All too soon, the final horn sounded. It was a terrific Saturday morning and served as a much needed reminder that we can get back to “normal” when we all work together.

A few take-aways for the future:

- Regardless of our personal feelings or views, when we are on a college campus, we must adhere to their protocols
  - Those protocols can and probably will vary from institution to institution
  - Make certain you are aware of the requirements and if you are uncomfortable at all, please assert your prerogative to decline the assignment
- Social distancing is going to continue to be required
- Please ensure that you maintain the 6 foot distance whenever possible and mask up when not whistling
  - Captains meetings
  - Nail checks
  - Table instructions
  - Quarter breaks

As for the actual play of the game, the one new rule that stood out a bit to me was the new requirement for putting the ball in play. A couple times, delay was correctly called because there was not a clear separation of the ball and the hand of the player. Both referees did an excellent job using the new signal (hand up to the sky) when a player was outside 6 meters and eligible to shoot or shoot after putting the ball in play.

NCAA water polo will be returning before we know it. Until we can all be back on deck together, please stay safe and healthy, take care of your loved ones and yourself and keep looking forward to all the polo that is to come!

Again, a huge thank you to Coach Rosa, his team and his staff at CBU.

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