

Mass Confrontation Defined:

- Verbal or physical actions which are disrespectful to the game, the opponent or officials where three or more players are involved.
- Can be toward opponents by more than one player from a single team that involves physical/verbal confrontation, aggressive behavior toward each other and, often, physical contact happens. Normally involves the coming together to engage in physical and/or verbal confrontation. Intimidation and a source of strength are often trademarks.
- Can be toward official(s) when players exhibit aggressive behavior often characterized by surrounding, hindering or forcing movement. An overall attitude focused on intimidation to influence a current or future outcome/decision.

Positioning by the referee can often be the difference between identifying or missing an off-the-ball offense. Failure to identify off-the-ball violent behavior offenses can lead to mass confrontation and game control issues. As a result, match officials must identify the optimal position to anticipate and observe the next phase of play. In addition, a strategic position lends itself to prevention because players will see and feel the aura and presence of the official.

Channel players to neutral areas

In cases of potential game disrepute or mass confrontation, use your physical presence as well as verbal (including the whistle) to separate players without making inappropriate physical contact.

Game Management

Management of game disrepute is vital in overall match control as it often escalates into mass confrontation which is difficult for referee teams to control. Game disrepute usually involves two opponents and occurs during a dead ball situation when aggressive behavior is exhibited toward an opponent to provoke them.

NCAA Recommendation: In situations of mass confrontation, The first step is for one official, usually the referee, to immediately intervene to separate and disperse the group of players. The nearest AR may enter the field of play to assist the referee. The other AR must observe and record details of the incident. The

fourth official should remain in the vicinity of the technical areas. This is to make sure that no substitutes leave the bench area.

Scenarios should be covered in the pre-game conference and allows officials to better monitor and manage these situations when they arise.

Once the situation is under control and players have been separated, the referee must dispense the appropriate punishment after ensuring he or she has solicited input from the entire referee team.

[Clip 1 Manhattan vs Rutgers - Mass Confrontation](#)

Referee Awareness: The referee intervenes to the situation with urgency. When he recognizes too many players getting involved, he takes a step back to view for any additional misconduct. At this point the referee needs to be using his whistle to jostle the minds of the players in order to de-escalate the confrontation.

Assistant Referee Awareness: When the AR sees the players confront each other he tries to step in and de-escalate the situation.

[Clip 2 Mercer vs Furman - Mass Confrontation](#)

In this clip, ask yourself... What was handled well, and what could be managed differently. Did we have the appropriate outcome? In this match there is no alternate official assigned, therefore as the referee you would need to adjust your pregame so that assistant referee 1 assumes the responsibilities of the bench area prior to assisting with the identification of misconduct during the mass confrontation.

[Clip 3 Clemson vs Duke - Mass Confrontation](#)

Lastly, should the referee in this clip have intervened sooner?

Did the triangle of control work?

What was positive?

In this match, video review was available and used to determine if violent behavior and/or fighting occurred within the mass confrontation.