

Folks,

A number of questions have come up recently regarding the hiring of referees who are also coaches, and then assigning them to matches involving teams from their club.

Our Officials' Handbook, which has incidentally been updated for this season ([https://www.ovr.org/officiating/OVR Officials Handbook.pdf](https://www.ovr.org/officiating/OVR%20Officials%20Handbook.pdf)), is very clear about this. The policy has been in place for years.

The bottom line: if you are a referee and also a coach, you CANNOT officiate matches involving teams from you club. Period. It creates a conflict of interest, whether perceived or real. It's not an issue of whether or not the OVR staff thinks you'll be impartial -- we're sure all of you are. The issue is that there is an automatic perception of bias in favor of the club you're affiliated with.

You MAY work for tournaments that are run by your club, but you MUST avoid matches with teams from your club.

Ideally, if you are working at a tournament where teams from your club are entered, you should NOT officiate the court/pool (and bracket in the afternoon) where the team(s) are scheduled. That is the best option for us. If that is not possible because each pool/bracket has a team from your club, then you must, at a minimum, recuse yourself from matches with your club's teams.

That may take some creative scheduling at times, but we need to do it. As referees, we have two things to rely on -- our professionalism and our credibility. We call both into question when we put ourselves in this compromising position, regardless of our intentions to call fair, equitable matches.

If you have questions in this regard, please let me know.

Thank you,

Brian Hemelgarn
OVR Referees' Chair