



BASKETBALL UKCC

COACH EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Health and Safety in Basketball

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Health and Safety in Basketball.

Introduction.

This book is intended to provide helpful information to all those involved in the sport of Basketball. Safety should be an integral part of all aspects of the game and at all levels from schools to professional clubs. Accidents and incidents that occur serve to highlight the importance of safety procedures and the need to adhere to such procedures at all times in order to prevent future problems. "Prevention is better than cure" and with careful planning and preparation many potentially unsafe situations can be avoided. The law requires that all coaches, officials, leaders and administrators have a "duty of care" for those over whom they have a responsibility.

People encounter risks in everyday life as well as in sport and to attempt to remove the risks entirely would neither be possible nor desirable. Whilst we would like to have absolute safety it is difficult to achieve. Basketball enthusiasts need to ensure that they manage the potential risks that they face and help others to develop a knowledge and awareness of basic safety requirements. The planning and implementation of any basketball activity in any situation should take full account of the safety requirements to ensure the organisers and participants safety.

Organisations must ensure that those who are appointed to undertake a "duty of care" must be suitably qualified and experienced to undertake such duties in a safe and proper manner. When a "duty of care" is breached, an action of negligence may be brought resulting in possible litigation and court proceedings.

It is hoped that this guide will provide those involved in Basketball with advice and information, which will allow them to analyse and adjust their current practices. It is impossible to cover every aspect or situation that will require professional judgement to be exercised. No one is expected to be perfect only that they should act in a manner that is "reasonable" in the light of commonly accepted and approved good practice within the sport of basketball.

To flout the laws of the game or the regulations of the sport is foolhardy. Common law and statute law impose certain duties on individuals and organisations within the sport. This book is not an attempt to interpret the law but to encourage good practice and safety.

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Basketball and Legislation

Basketball, by the very nature of the sport, will always have, as part of its challenge, the risk of accident and Injury.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires organisations to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of employees (coaches, leaders, officials, players and administrators) and non-employees such as volunteers, children, parents and others, who enter the premises/facilities where basketball activity is taking place. There should not be an over-reaction to the need for safety, just a respect for safety procedures.

The Management of the Health and Safety at Work Regulations.1992 requires all organisations, which operate basketball premises/facilities/activities to ensure that the arrangements for safety are regularly reviewed and assessed for risks to participants.

The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 require fire precaution checks to be carried out and risk assessments to be recorded in all facilities/premises where basketball activities are undertaken. This is to include the checking of access to emergency fire exits, fire extinguishers/blankets, emergency/fire evacuation procedures and adequate signage. This should be done on a regular basis and both participants and spectators should be familiar with the safety arrangements in place.

The Occupiers Liability Acts of 1957 and 1984 impose a "duty of care" upon those organisations which manage basketball facilities/premises to ensure that participants and spectators are reasonably safe for the purposes of basketball activities.

The Children's Act. 1989 has implications for all persons working in a professional or voluntary capacity within basketball. Those involved in coaching, leading and organising children must adhere strictly to the code of conduct pertaining to physical contact with children. The sport's governing body, Basketball England, has published "Child Protection Policy" (Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults) which gives important advice and guidance to all participants and enthusiasts.

SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Legal Responsibilities.

Court cases in recent years have highlighted the fact that coaches, officials, leaders, players or organisers do not have any immunity from prosecution. Participants at and during training and games are owed a duty of care by the Organisers, Coach, Leader or Officials. Most cases that go to court involve the common law of negligence.

“Negligence may be alleged where someone has fallen below the standard of care required in the circumstances by some act or omission which fails to protect others from the unreasonable risk of harm”

In order to establish a claim for damages for negligence, it is necessary to show there has been negligence or a breach of the duty of care on the part of the coach, official, leader, organiser or player which has directly resulted in some injury or damage to another participant. Reasonable precautions need to be taken to prevent foreseeable accidents. Ignorance or failure to take reasonable precautions could result in claims for negligence.

The defence against allegations of negligence is likely to be successful if the coach can show that:

- (a) All reasonable steps had been taken to establish a safe working environment using safe equipment.
- (b) The work done and the manner in which it was done was in keeping with "regular and approved practice" in other similar basketball premises/facilities across the country.
- (c) The activity being undertaken was suitable for the age, experience and ability of the participants.
- (d) The participants have been systematically prepared for the activity being undertaken and wore appropriate clothing and footwear.
- (e) The participants were well trained in their own safety needs and warned against foolhardiness.
- (f) The coach/official/leader/organiser/player was appropriately trained and qualified to conduct the relevant activity at the appropriate level.
- (g) Any assistants/volunteers were fully briefed on the limitations of their role within the basketball activity.

If the above have been fulfilled then it becomes much easier to refute allegations of negligence.

Safe Working Conditions.

All reasonable steps should be taken to establish a safe working environment. Risk assessment is a legal requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992. Risk assessment involves the identification of potential harm that could affect participants in a basketball environment and the implementation of precautions to prevent it. England Basketball has a Risk Assessment template which can be used as a guide in evaluating risks in a basketball environment. A copy is attached at the end of this booklet and is also available to download from the England Basketball website at www.englandbasketball.co.uk in the Development section.

Regular risk assessments are part of good practice in identifying potential problems and hazards. A hazard is anything that may cause harm whilst a risk is the chance that the hazard may harm someone. Dangerous surfaces and obstructions, incorrect or inappropriate equipment are examples of hazards.

It is important to apply common sense to risk management. Any potential risk that could result in serious injury must be addressed immediately.

Playing Court

The floor of the basketball court should give a degree of traction that allows the participants to stop and turn quickly without slipping. The floor should be cleaned regularly and, if as a result of being polished or dirty it becomes slippery, the coach/official/leader/organiser/player should seriously consider cancelling the session/activity. If any activity is carried out on a floor, which is slippery, then suitable changes should be made in the activity programme and the participants made aware of the problem with the floor. When a spillage occurs it needs to be mopped up immediately.

On courts with baskets with less than 2.25m overhang from backboard to the supports or end-wall, a coach/leader/official/organiser should be aware that the overhang has been specified as a safety factor for

International (FIBA) Competition. (Most coaches will be working with non-international players and in such circumstances it may be suitable for practices to be carried out on courts with restricted or even no overhang.)

For example, courts with no overhang can be used for shooting practice and small games with beginners. However, the players' attention should be drawn to the lack of a suitable overhang and the practice conditioned accordingly.

As player's progress and the game becomes more vigorous, so the overhang from backboard to support becomes more important. For beginners a 0.60m distance may be sufficient, but as the players improve, a minimum of 1.20 metres overhang from to wall or support is vital.

FIBA rules require that the playing court should have at least 2 metres from outside the boundary lines of the court to any obstructions. This is particularly important in games involving top class players whether at club or international level

Where 2 metres is not possible, any obstructions, especially those that protrude should be padded. Spare equipment, such as badminton posts, benches etc., should be removed from the courtside. Coaches/Leaders/Officials/Players and Organisers should be made aware of any obstruction(s).

The padding and protection of dangerous items, immediately behind the backboard, is of prime importance. Items such as five-a-side football goals should not be stored within 2 metres of the endline. Windows under the backboard should be boarded over. In addition a check should be made that the winder for the backboard is not at a height that could injure a leaping player. The winder handle should be removed and the unit padded.

The playing court should have adequate lighting with light units that do not hinder the players' vision when shooting for basket.

BACKBOARDS, RINGS AND NETS

Checks should be made, periodically, of the mountings of the backboard to ensure that they are firmly fixed. The rings and baskets should be of regulation pattern, and rings that have spring clips for the attachment of the net should not be used with senior players, who are able to reach up and touch the ring. The ring should not have any abrasive or cutting edges.

The net should be no longer than 40cm, made of fine nylon or cotton mesh. Wire or chain links should be avoided. For top class competition the underside edge and bottom corners of the backboard should be suitably padded. (See FIBA rules for specifications)

PORTABLE BACKBOARDS

These are usually large, cumbersome and heavy and need to be handled with care. Even when weighted down, according to the manufacturer's recommendations they are not always stable. Care should therefore be taken in their use. Dunking and hanging on the ring can cause the stand to overbalance. Accordingly, hanging on the ring should be banned with portable equipment. Where the backboard overhang is reduced, then the stand must be adequately padded.

Some of the most common causes of injury are due to lifting, moving, and assembling equipment. For a basketball club it is advisable to have facility staff move and assemble equipment, as they should have been trained in its safe handling. Players/Officials/Volunteers should be discouraged from moving equipment and if the equipment has to be moved by club members then it should be carried out under the supervision of a responsible club official.

When assembling any equipment it is essential that the manufacturers' instructions are read and followed.

OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT

England Basketball recommends that wherever possible equipment for use-of-outdoors should be permanently fixed. Outdoor portable backboards and stands that require weights are a serious hazard in windy conditions and should be dismantled after use. (See Outdoor Basketball Initiative Site Co-ordinators Manual).

BALLS

These should not be over-inflated and should be checked regularly for rips.
The British Standards institution has published a standard for Basketballs. Equipment BS 1892 Section 2.7.

REGULAR AND APPROVED PRACTICE

The work done, and the manner, in which it is done, should be in keeping with "regular and approved practice" in other basketball facilities/premises across the country,

TRAINING SESSIONS

Earlier it was stated that one defence against an allegation of negligence was that the work being carried out was in keeping with "regular and approved practice" in other basketball facilities/premises across the country and proved by time and experience to be safe and efficient.

- (a) The Coach should remember that he or she is responsible for supervising the activity from the moment the coach arrives until the players depart. The attention of the coach should not be distracted to deal with other matters, e.g. club administration or to answer the telephone.
- (b) The player to coach ratio should be such that the coach can exercise effective control over the group while coaching and teaching. The ratio of coaches to participants does vary from club to club depending on the number of players in each section etc. The UK Source Group for Basketball recommends, as a guide, a coach: player ratio of 1:15 dependent upon physical ability and sporting / basketball knowledge of the group of players and the coach and club should conduct a risk assessment on the group prior to commencing the coaching session.
- (c) Basketballs should be carefully controlled at all times. They should be placed in a safe position and not under the player's feet. When a ball is being moved from one station to another in the practice, it should not be moved across an area in a manner dangerous to other players. Players should never kick a ball. Remember a serious accident can occur due to a player treading on a ball.
- (d) When working on drills involving more than one ball, the balls should be carefully controlled.
- (e) The coach/leader must prevent foolhardiness by players/participants.
- (f) The coach should arrange the practices so those players who are concentrating on a particular practice are all working in the same direction. For example, players practising defensive footwork against a dribbler should work in one direction, across or down the court. After a repetition they walk back, carrying the ball, to the starting position, preferably across a piece of floor outside the court that is not being used by other players. The coach should organise the practices so that working players do not move through another working group, especially blind and at speed. Care should be exercised when the area of work of groups overlap. This is particularly true when vigorous drills are being used.
- (g) When using shuttle runs (line drills) the coach should ensure that each player has sufficient room to work. The players will be moving at speed and may be fatigued. Serious injuries have occurred by players turning rapidly and colliding. When turning or stopping at the end of runs, this should not be done using solid walls as boundaries. Practices should stop prior to the wall. Although the coach may correctly give instructions for stops to be made at a line, players may still choose to run into a wall to stop. This practice should be discouraged and the players warned as to the danger of injury.
- (h) A passing practice that involves throwing the ball to hit another player's leg is potentially dangerous and should not be used.

WORKING WITH BEGINNERS

The coach/leader should exercise due discretion when playing alongside his/her charges, particularly when they are young children. Coaches/leaders are advised not to join in competitively. They are there to develop the players ability not their own. When the coach feels it appropriate that he or she joins in to demonstrate or control the tempo of the game, then special care should be taken. (See later section on working with young players).

The lack of initial skill in the game is a substantial contributory factor in causing accidents. It is, therefore, important to raise the initial skill level of players by coaching sessions. This becomes a safety precaution before playing highly competitive matches.

THE RULES

It is essential that activities undertaken abide by the official FIBA Rules of basketball and their official interpretations. Organisations do not have the right to change the rules or introduce local rules which contravene health and safety.

TEAM-MATES AND OPPONENTS

Players should be aware of their responsibility to other players, both team-mates and opponents. A court case has established that a player who deliberately injures another player during a sporting contest by acting, contrary to the rules of the activity, in a manner to which the injured party could not be expected to consent, will be liable for damage caused as a result of the "illegal action".

In the Crown Court a rugby player who had kicked an opponent after a tackle was convicted of grievous bodily harm and given an 18 month jail sentence!

AGE, ABILITY AND EXPERIENCE

The activity being undertaken should be suitable for the age, experience and ability of the participants.

FITNESS

A good coach/leader should be aware of the nature of fitness and protect his/her players from activities which are beyond their physical and mental capabilities. The coach should appreciate the physical capabilities of individual players and organise training sessions to provide a progressive increase in workload. This is particularly important when dealing with young players. (See later section on working with young players).

WARM UP/COOL DOWN

The importance of warming up before and cooling down after any period of hard physical work should be remembered.

MEDICAL PROBLEMS

The Coach/leader needs to be aware of any medical problems that players/participants may have, or any player in the group who is recovering from injury. He/She should check whether any club member is taking medication that could limit their physical capabilities, or whether any club member has any disability. For example, if the group contains a player who suffers from epileptic fits, would the Coach/leader know how to handle any fit safely? Recovery from injury should be a team effort, with the team including the Players, the Coach, and the Medical Advisers (Doctor and Physiotherapist)

COMPETITION

Care needs to be exercised when organising competitive play for groups or teams. The competitive play should be appropriate for the age and experience of the players, and if the players are not equally matched care should be taken to ensure that injury does not result from the mismatch. The Coach/leader should recognise that if he/she gives instructions to a player to mark an opponent such that unnecessary contact occurs and the opponent is injured, then the coach/leader leaves him/herself open to action in the courts.

PREPARATION

It is obvious that in some sports (e.g. gymnastics it is important that the performers have developed certain basic skills before moving on to more complex routines. Coaches should remember that this still applies in basketball. Lack of basic skill can play a part in causing accidents. Therefore, the coach/leader has a responsibility to raise the basic skill level of the players as a safety measure, prior to introducing highly competitive games/practices.

The coach should avoid teaching activities that are beyond the capabilities of the players, either technically or physically. The coach who encourages young or inexperienced players to "take the charge" may be creating a potentially dangerous situation that would be difficult to defend if there was a serious injury which gave rise to a court case. Equally, the coach who has inexperienced players "diving" for a loose ball would be negligent if injury occurred, particularly if the floor surface was a potential hazard, e.g. abrasive asphalt or inflexible Granwood.

Improper techniques or improper progression from the basic to the more complex skill can lead to injury. Players should be warned that injury can be caused by improper movements e.g., the defender "taking out" the opponent who has beaten them and is jumping for a shot at goal. The foul by the defender can lead to injury, and if the injury is serious could lead to the defender being liable to be sued for damages.

SAFETY AND SUITABILITY

Players should be well trained in their own safety needs and warned against foolhardiness

PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT (see FIBA rules)

Jewellery such as rings and neck chains should not be worn. Watches should be removed and fingernails closely trimmed. All these items are of potential danger when players are engaged in basketball. There is an obvious danger to earlobes from earrings being torn out. When ears are initially pierced it is essential that the sleepers are not removed for about six weeks and further six months is required for the skin tract to become fully established. After six months there is unlikely to be any harm caused if the sleepers are removed for a few hours. Therefore players who regularly wear earrings should remove these completely (after the six months period) or wear a stud type sleeper (during the six months period).

Where the length of hair is such that it might obscure vision, then it must be tied back. Players should not be permitted to play basketball in bare or stocking feet or shoes without correctly tied laces. Basketball involves a great deal of running, stopping, changing direction, jumping and landing, and without good footwear a player can suffer injury. A good basketball shoe gives improved grip on the floor, supports the feet and cushions the jumping and landing that will occur during the game. As players progress from novice level they should be encouraged to obtain specialist basketball footwear.

A good coach/leader will ensure that players are fully aware of safe standards of playing kit and players should be encouraged to accept some responsibility for knowing when their kit is unsafe or inappropriate. In this context, footwear is particularly important in basketball

PREGNANCY

Basketball is a vigorous and physically demanding game in which there is the risk of accident and injury. Playing or officiating whilst pregnant can be a safety hazard to both the participant and the unborn child. In addition it places opponents in a very difficult situation. The pregnant player should be encouraged to seek the advice of their medical practitioner with regard to whether and how long to continue playing, but it is recommended that they should not take part in a competitive match beyond the twelfth week of pregnancy.

PROTECTING THE EYES

Although the wearing of spectacles is not impossible in basketball they can be inconvenient and the use of contact lenses is recommended. The soft lens type are the most suitable for sport. When spectacles are worn, the frames should be of flexible plastic with impact resistant plastic lenses and with an elasticised band that attaches to the sides and fits behind the head.

Players who have had some injury to an eye and wish to give themselves protection can obtain visors which are one piece moulded plastic with an elasticised head band and soft protection over nose and temple. This also applies to recently developed ophthalmic visors as an alternative to contact lenses.

DISCIPLINE

The coach/leader should establish a working relationship where discipline is good. Self-discipline by each individual player must be developed. When a Coach/leader anticipates a dangerous situation developing he/she should have a clear stop signal (e.g. Whistle) that the players will respond to immediately. Discipline is important to create a safe working atmosphere.

PLAYING WHEN INJURED

Players should be discouraged from training or playing on through an injury. If they do, the player is likely to take longer to recover or develop a permanent injury from which they will not recover. For a player to receive pain killing injections to enable them to play in an important match is a very dangerous practice and should not be condoned.

OVER TRAINING

In the physical preparation of a player the coach is creating a cycle of **TRAINING - STRESS -FATIGUE - RECOVERY**. Excessive stress or inadequate recovery time from the training load can lead to injury. Therefore, coaches need to have a sufficient understanding of the physiology of exercise so that they can help the players reach their best possible level of performance whilst at the same time reducing the risk of injury.

WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

One of the first skills that wheelchair players should be taught is how to fall out of the chair, and especially how to react when the player fall backwards. When this occurs it is vital that the player makes a quick movement to lean forward, thus protecting their head from injury.

THE STANDARD OF THE COACH/ LEADER/ OFFICIAL/ ORGANISER/ PLAYER

The Coach/Leader/Official/Organiser/Player should be appropriately trained and qualified to conduct the activity at the appropriate level.

WORKING WITH SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

When working with young players, the coach/ leader/ official/ organiser/ player is expected to exercise at least the same concern for those in their care as a good parent would exercise, in looking after their own children. A coach needs to have an acceptable level of knowledge and skill to teach and coach the game including ways in which to organise training sessions. From time to time a qualified coach who does not hold a teaching qualification may find him/ herself working with a group of school children in a school. In a school environment a qualified teacher should be present at all times, since they retain prime responsibility for the safety of the school children. Therefore, a visiting coach should insist that the teacher is present throughout the training session. The visiting coach must still exercise due care because the teacher may have only limited knowledge of the game. The visiting coach is the expert and will be expected to undertake work in keeping with "regular and approved practice" in other facilities/premises across the country. The watchword for coaches when working with children should be "watch the child" rather than "watch the ball".

GROWTH AND MATURITY

This area of work has been brought into sharper focus due to some recent court cases and International Congresses on "The Growing Child in Competitive Sport". Children are not miniature adults. Children do not grow at an even rate. A group of children of the same sex and age are likely to be at very different stages in their growth and development. Problems can arise when children are made to conform to an adult concept of training and competition. Any training/activity programme must be related/ modified to the physiological stages of the child's development. Growing child athletes are more likely to suffer injuries due to the fact that their bones and joints are still growing. Similarly repetitive jumping and landing is more likely to lead to injury and heavy weight work is unsuitable for the sub 16 age group. Depth jumping should also be avoided with young age groups since it places an unnecessary load on the knees. Further details on Long Term Athlete Development for young players is available on your NGB website.

DEMONSTRATIONS OF TECHNIQUE INVOLVING BODY CONTACT

When the coach is demonstrating a technique that involves any body contact, due care should be taken in executing the technique with young players. The coach needs to bear in mind the differences in weight, strength and skill.

MATCHING PLAYERS

The coach/leader/player may find that they are working with a mixed group of players of different ages, maturity and sex. In these situations efforts should be made to match the players in size, sex, skill and physical maturity.

INJURIES

If a coach should have a player injured during a practice session and then be sued for negligence, an important defence would be for the coach to show that he/she had attended a coach training course organised by the appropriate Basketball Association and had gained the recommended Coaching Award.

INJURIES (AND THE REFEREES)

The rules of the game are designed with a view to the prevention of injury. Dangerous situations may arise when beginners take part in matches involving fierce competition with no referee. A referee plays an important part in accident prevention.

Although basketball is theoretically a no-contact game, the rules acknowledge that it is obvious that personal contact cannot be avoided entirely when ten players are moving at great speed within a limited space. However the personal contact should be limited and controlled. A player shall not block, hold, push, charge, trip or impede the progress of an opponent by extending his/her arm, shoulder, hip or knee, or- by bending their body into other than normal position, nor use any rough tactics. (see FIBA rules).

The coach/leader should ensure that during competitive play excessive personal contact does not occur. When introducing basketball to beginners it is recommended that the game is played strictly as a no-contact game. During activity sessions the coach/leader has a responsibility for ensuring that the rules prohibiting excessive physical contact and rough play are always enforced.

The person refereeing the game plays an important part in injury prevention and safety. The referee needs to apply the rules fairly and firmly and punish dangerous play immediately. The rules contain provision for disqualifying the player who commits a deliberate and potentially dangerous foul and this rule should be applied whenever necessary by the official.

When a player is injured during the course of play the referee, in order to protect the injured player, may suspend play immediately. This is usually the case when the player falls on the floor in the area under the basket where other players are rebounding.

Although the referee will usually refrain from blowing the whistle until the current attack has been completed provided that the player is not in any immediate danger (i.e., the other players have moved away from the fallen player), the referee should nevertheless always check to see whether the player is unconscious or seriously injured. If so, the referee should suspend play immediately in order that the player may receive urgent attention.

Whenever a player is injured the referee has to make a judgement regarding the seriousness of the injury. If the referee suspects that the injury is serious then he/she should suspend play immediately and allow help to be given to the injured player as quickly as possible.

ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

All coaches/leaders/officials/organisers and players benefit from a working knowledge of First Aid, since they all must expect to meet with accidents and injury at some time. However if the coach/leader does not know what to do it is better to do nothing, call for specialist first aid or medical help immediately and make the player comfortable in the meantime.

The coach/leader should be able to prevent aggravation of any injury, take steps to aid the players physically, and know when and how to summon help and call an ambulance if necessary. All organisations should have a system as to what to do when injury does occur. The coach/leader should be fully aware of his/her responsibilities in such an arrangement.

Some simple questions for the coach/leader to ask are "Where is the First Aid Kit?" "Where is the nearest telephone?" "Where is the nearest accident hospital?" "Does it have 24 hour opening?" Failure to be able to answer these questions is a serious oversight by the coach/leader.

When regularly working in a Sports Facility/Premises, officials from the organisation, including the coach/leader, should know the whereabouts of the First Aid Room, the means of access and staffing arrangements.

When an accident does occur a record should be kept of the incident. The following details should be included on the accident report form; an example of form is shown below:-

Name of Player

Home Address

Nature of the injury

Description of accident (include note whether training or competition)

Immediate action taken (Details of any first aid given and by whom)

Doctor called? (Name of Doctor)

Sent to Hospital? - Which?

Parent or other individual notified? Who? When? How? By Whom?

Witness 1)

Witness 2)

Witness 3)

FIRST AID

First aid is the immediate and sustained care given to the victim of an accident until such time as more professional assistance becomes available. In some cases it is as important to know what not to do as to know what action to take. For the coach/leader/official/organiser the first consideration is obviously the prevention of accidents, but when the inevitable emergency occurs the coach/leader/official/organiser should be capable of dealing with the situation and caring for the victim without causing further complications.

The first aider should be concerned with: -

- ✧ Preservation of life
- ✧ Prevention of further injury
- ✧ Relief of pain and injury

For the coach/leader this will involve: -

- ✧ Treatment of severe haemorrhage
- ✧ Immobilising the injured player
- ✧ Keeping the player warm and comfortable as a treatment for shock.
- ✧ Calling professional medical aid.

The priorities when an accident occurs should be: -

- ✧ Take charge, keep calm, get others to help.
- ✧ Assess the situation, work quietly and without fuss.
- ✧ Give reassurance to all by your demeanour.
- ✧ Deal with life situations first Breathing, Bleeding etc. To stop bleeding press a heavy pad directly onto the wound and keep the blood in the player not on the floor.
- ✧ Deal with the more serious injuries first.
- ✧ If several persons are injured then deal with those who will benefit most from treatment.
- ✧ Watch out for shock.
- ✧ Remember that if you have limited knowledge of first aid only deal with the life situations and call medical aid quickly.
- ✧ If it is possible that hospital treatment will be required, do not give drugs, drinks or food.
- ✧ If in doubt call for the ambulance.
- ✧ Your aim is to save life, to help recovery, to avoid complications.

When dealing with sprains and strains the coach/leader should remember RICE
(Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation).

Finally and most important, should a participant bang his/her head and become unconscious, even for a fraction of a second then this person should take no further part in physical activity and should go immediately to a hospital accident department for a check-up.

Never underestimate the potential seriousness of head injuries.

FIRST AID BOX

A first aid box should contain at least the following items:-

- (a) several triangular cotton bandages
- (b) safety pins
- (c) a mild antiseptic solution
- (d) pack of sterilised gauze
- (e) packs of sterilised cotton wool
- (f) bandages and plasters varying sizes
- (g) blunt-nosed scissors
- (h) crepe bandages
- (i) guidance card
- (j) sterile disposable gloves

INSURANCE

Although coaches, leaders, officials, tutors and organisers may take every precaution to prevent accidents these may still occur and it is important to stress the essential need for coaches, leaders, officials, tutors, organisers and participants to obtain the necessary Insurance Cover. (England Basketball includes Insurance as part of its affiliation fee and this is a very significant benefit of full membership of the Association).

The teacher working in a school or any extended school environment is often covered by the Insurance Policies of the Local Education Authority by whom they are employed. However, it is important that every teacher should make themselves familiar with the extent of that cover and they should not take it for granted. It is essential that coaches, leaders, officials, tutors and organisers working in the basketball environment are protected by Personal Liability Insurance cover for up to £2 million. This provides protection in case they should be held legally liable for any injury etc and suitable cover can be obtained direct from England Basketball for coaches and officials with an England Basketball Coaching or Officiating qualification.

It cannot be stressed too highly, the desirability of all those involved in coaching, leading and/or officiating, to be in possession of a current and appropriate England Basketball qualification.

Similarly every organisation should have Public Liability Insurance cover and each Individual participant should be encouraged to obtain Personal Accident Insurance. Both these are automatically provided at no extra cost to all organisations, clubs and individuals affiliating to England Basketball. The cover provided is as follows:

Public Liability Insurance for Member Clubs

This provides cover for up to £5 million should the club or club member be found legally liable for any accident, bodily injury or damage to property arising from club activities.

Personal Accident Insurance for Individual Member Clubs (Seniors only)

- (i) Lump sum benefit of £5000 in the event of death or permanent total disablement.
- (ii) Income benefit for loss of earnings due to injury.
- (iii) Dental and optical treatment costs up to £250 (except replacement of contact lenses and spectacles).

Junior members are automatically provided with the lump sum benefit of £2500 for permanent total disablement.

Full details of the insurance available through England Basketball membership are available from the England Basketball website. There are various categories of additional insurance benefits that can be obtained from reading the England Basketball pamphlet on Insurance provided through Membership of England Basketball.

GUIDELINES FOR CONTROL AND SAFETY OF SPECTATORS

1. SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

- 1.1 There should be adequate separation between the court and spectators. Only in **exceptional** circumstances will less than 2 metres outside the playing boundary be acceptable
No photographers or cameramen shall be permitted within 2 metres of the playing boundary.
- 1.2 There should be adequate separation between the score/officials table and team benches and spectators. Only in **exceptional** circumstances will a separation of less than 2 metres be acceptable.
- 1.3 Spectators should be segregated from the playing area by a "barrier" on at least the two long sides of the courts. This barrier could take the form of advertising boards.
- 1.4 All reserved seating should be distinctly marked. Markings should also designate whether reservation is for season-ticket holders, VIP'S, special guests, accredited media etc.

2. CROWD BEHAVIOUR

- 2.1 The playing area should be kept clear of spectators and other unauthorised persons at all times, prominent notices should be displayed inside the Facility/Premises to ensure the co-operation of spectators Stewards (see 6.1) shall have the responsibility for effecting this regulation.
- 2.2 Spectators who throw projectiles from the-seating areas onto the playing court or into other seating areas **SHALL** be ejected from the arena.
- 2.3 No items used by the spectators, and regarded by the officials as conflicting with Official Sounding-devices, shall be permitted at any basketball game.
- 2.4 Individuals or groups who are guilty of causing disturbances, of using foul and abusive language, or of the incitement of detrimental crowd behaviour shall be ejected from the arena. (See also EB policy on Racism).

3. SAFETY

- 3.1 In general the integration of fans of opposing teams should not be discouraged within the seating areas. Only in exceptional circumstances, where it is felt that there is already bad feeling between opposing fans, should segregation be enforced.
- 3.2 If, in the opinion of the Promoter, the Association, the Facility/Premises Management or the Police, any match is expected to attract such a large crowd as to pose problems (such as overcrowding, or the turning away of spectators at the door) then such game should be designated an "all ticket match". Where possible one month's notice that such a match is "all ticket" should be given, and advance warning should be given through the Club's programme, the Association the media and the visiting Club. The visiting Club should be given an option on a reasonable number of tickets for their own fans.
- 3.3 Smoking shall **not be permitted** at any promotion. Prominent notices shall be displayed to this effect Inside the facility/premises, and notification of the fact shall appear in the match programme.
- 3.4 Walkways into and exits out of the arena should be distinctly marked to avoid crowd confusion and congestion.

4. PROTECTION OF OFFICIALS

- 4.1 Match Officials shall be allocated a private changing room that has easy access from the playing court. Where easy access is not possible, match officials shall be offered temporary, secure accommodation (such as an office), with easy access from the playing court, at the end of the match.

- 4.2 Adequate protection shall be given to match officials at the end of each halt. It is recommended that at least one Senior Steward be allocated the responsibility of accompanying the referees to their changing rooms, this Steward shall be additional to the recommended ratio (see 6.1).
- 4.3 There should be separate access to the Basketball Facility/Premises for teams, their directors, special guests and officials, from that used by the spectators.
- 4.4 No spectator or other unauthorised person shall be permitted in the changing-room area. Stewards shall be allocated appropriately to ensure that these areas are kept free for players' and officials' use only.

5. CO-OPERATION WITH OUTSIDE AUTHORITIES

- 5.1 Promoters should have regular dialogue with their local Police and Chief Fire Officers with regard to improving standard of safety and control.
- 5.2 The crowd capacity limit set by the Facility/Premises Management, Police and Chief Fire Officer should be rigidly enforced.
- 5.3 Where the Police deem it to be necessary, Clubs should have in attendance at a match the necessary number of uniformed officers. Recommended numbers in this respect are one Constable per 500 spectators up to 2000 spectators, and one Constable per 1000 above that.
- 5.4 All spectator seating areas shall conform to the standards laid down by the Facility/Premises Management, the Police, and the Chief Fire Officer.
- 5.5 The Police should be advised by Clubs of their home promotion schedule for the Season. Clubs should seek the co-operation in respect of policing the facility/premises Car Parks before, during and after the promotion.
- 5.6 The St John's Ambulance Brigade or Red Cross shall be invited to send uniformed officers to all promotions.

6. CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 An adequate number of Stewards shall be available at the entrance to and inside the Basketball Facility/Premises. It is recommended that one Steward per 100 spectators be used inside the Facility/Premises. The Stewards' prime function shall be as follows:-
 - (a) To aid easy access to and from the spectator seating areas.
 - (b) To aid evacuation of the building in the case of emergency
 - (c) To co-operate with Facility/Premises Management in relation to the above and other matters regarding safety and control.
 - (d) To offer protection to players, officials and participants.
 - (e) To protect the playing court from intrusion by spectators and other unauthorised persons, particular attention shall be given to this during the half-time interval, at the end of the game, and during periods of high excitement and tension.
 - (f) To identify, and eject from the Facility/Premises any spectator whose conduct is in gross breach of these regulations.

Stewards should be easily identifiable by means of wearing of distinctive and bright-coloured clothing.

- 6.2 Clubs shall print in their programmes such notices as shall be demanded of them by the Association, by the Police or Fire Authority, or the Facility/Premises Management.
- 6.3 Clubs shall insure, with a reputable insurance company, the management, officials and players of the Club against legal claims by the public (Public Liability Cover). It is recommended that cover to the value of £2,000,000 is obtained in this respect, and that the Facility/Premises owners' advice be sought regarding the scope of additional cover.
- 6.4 Announcers shall be fully briefed and familiar with both the facility/premises fire warning/emergency instructions for evacuation, and with the relevant guidelines above.

7. **STEWARDING**

- 7.1 All stewards should be capable of carrying out their duties and should be trained to do so.
- 7.2 Stewards must be informed in writing of all that they are expected to know and do. The following list gives examples of typical tasks and duties which stewards should be expected to carry out and for which they should be prepared. Stewards should :-
- (a) Prevent overcrowding by ensuring the crowd limits in various parts of the facility/premises are compiled.
 - (b) Prevent spectators, as far as possible, from climbing onto any restricted part of the arena, or sitting or standing in any part of the arena where they will be a hazard or an obstruction. If the stewards are unable to prevent this, they should immediately report the matter to the promoter.
 - (c) Ensure that gangways and exits are kept clear.
 - (d) Identify and investigate any incident or occurrence among spectators, reporting their findings to the promoter.
 - (e) Know the location of and be able to operate effectively the fire-fighting equipment at the arena, and know the location and method of opening of all emergency exits.
 - (f) Know the location of the first aid room and any first aid equipment kept elsewhere.
 - (g) Be fully conversant with any methods or signals used to alert staff that an emergency has arisen.
 - (h) Be conversant with the technical requirements of the sport and be prepared to assist the match officials (e.g. repairing equipment, wiping floor, organising refreshments etc.) when necessary.
 - (i) Comply promptly with any instruction given in an emergency by a police officer, the promoter or a match official.
 - (j) Remain at their allocated posts as instructed unless authorised or ordered to do otherwise by a police officer, the promoter, or a match official.
 - (k) Report to the promoter any damage, defect or overcrowding which is likely to pose a threat to safety.
 - (l) Prevent the encroachment of spectators onto the playing court, and help to safeguard players and officials where necessary.

In all these matters it is essential that organisers are consistent in their approach from venue to venue irrespective of the nature of the facilities/premises. The health and safety of all participants and spectators is of paramount importance. The rules of basketball as laid down by FIBA (International Basketball Federation) provide considerable information concerning the conduct of competitive basketball activity and the provision of adequate facilities and playing equipment. Whilst every conceivable situation that may occur cannot possibly be covered in this booklet, the application of common sense and a "duty of care" should be foremost in any deliberations.

ESSENTIAL READING

England Basketball Child Protection Policy July 2005. available from www.englandbasketball.co.uk
basketballscotland Child Protection Policy
FIBA Official Rules of Basketball

Basketball Risk Assessment

Venue:

Name and position of person doing check:

Date of check:

RISK CALCULATOR

For each type of risk is: Likelihood x severity x No of people= Size of risk

AREAS OF RISK

PLAYING/TRAINING AREA

Ensure playing surface clear of all obstacles, non-slippery etc
 Ensure appropriate run-offs for court (inc spectator areas)
 Competitive matches; (ensure all FIBA/NBL/official standards met)

EQUIPMENT (ensure indoor basketball equipment test undertaken - where applicable)

Ensure backboards in full working order
 Ensure Rims fully secured
 Ensure all electronic equipment PAT tested
 Ensure all wires and sockets covered

PERFORMERS

Ensure all performers suitably attired
 Ensure qualified coach/officials in place

EMERGENCY POINTS

Emergency exits (marked and Lit and free from blockages)
 Check that evacuation procedures are published
 and posted somewhere for all to see (all staff aware of procedure)
 Is a working telephone available?
 Ensure appropriate First Aid officer available
 Ensure appropriate First Aid equipment available

Name:

Signature:

GUIDE TO RISK ASSESSMENT (To identify the size of Risk the Likelihood is multiplied by the Severity of risk)

Type of risk	T = Trip Hazard (fall injury, etc) E = Electrical (burns, scolds etc)	No of people	10 people + = 3 2-9 people = 2 1 person = 1
Likelihood	Very Likely = 3 Quite Likely = 2 Unlikely = 1	Size of risk	1 – 6 Acceptable Risk 6 – 12 Unacceptable Risk, (Risk identified MUST have an immediate action plan in place) 12 + Unacceptable risk (NO ACTIVITY MUST TAKE PLACE)
Severity	Death/Serious Injury = 3 3 Day Injury = 2 First Aid/Minor = 1		