

# Jump Ball – Going the Wrong Way

What should you do when the teams are going in the wrong direction?

You had a good pregame meeting with your partners and you feel poised and prepared as you step into the packed high school gym.

The starting lineup hoopla is completed and you nod to your partners before you step into the center circle for the jump ball to start the game.

The toss is perfect and Team A's jumper times their leap perfectly and taps it to a teammate who dribbles in for the first two points of the game.

Over the deafening roar of the crowd you can see the coaches and the scorekeeper waving frantically for your attention.

Before you can mutter, "what the ...."

*...you realize the teams were facing the wrong way and Team A scored in Team B's basket.*

Now what?

The first thing to remember is when you have an "official" problem (i.e. an inadvertent whistle; a block/charge snafu, etc.), you don't want to compound the problem by "fixing things" incorrectly...You have to calmly get it right. This will mentally put your crew back on track and demonstrate to the coaches that you are not just winging it.

Also, this is NOT a correctable error situation, and therefore not subject to the correctable error timeline.

Lining the players up facing the wrong basket is an official's mistake and should be corrected **whenever it is brought to your attention.**

The remedy is a simple one:

***Turn the teams around and keep EVERYTHING ELSE the same...***

This is not a pick-up game; there are no "do-overs." The time and score stay as is.

If this jump ball debacle has happened to one of your fellow officials; learn from their mistake and don't repeat it...They took the bullet – albeit a self-inflicted wound — for you; so don't let it be for nothing.

One foolproof way to ensure this jump ball mix-up will never occur in your game is to make sure the two jumpers are **directly across** from their OWN benches. Team A's jumper should be on the SAME side of the division line as his/her teammates; and the same, obviously, for Team B's jumper.

However, for **any and every overtime session** in the game, the jumpers should be directly across from their OPPONENT'S bench.

It is a rocky, and admittedly, embarrassing way to start a game, but correcting the mistake correctly is the only way to make the best of a bad situation. Because undoubtedly this play will be discussed by the coaches and spectators in their post-game analysis of the contest, so the only redeeming factor will be that you knew what to do to fix the problem.

So take a quick peek at your benches before you toss the ball and you will always avoid jumping into a problem.

*Rule Reference*  
*NFHS Casebook 5.2.1*