



NATIONAL CLUB
BASKETBALL
ASSOCIATION

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The following are the results of the Niagara protests of their games against Cornell on November 19th, 2016.

Games 1, 2, & 3 were protested by Niagara for Failure to secure officials that met NCBBA minimum certifications and Uniform Violations.

Requested action - Forfeit games.

PROTEST: (Dustin Dorensen President Niagara Club Basketball)

“7.00.00 (Uniforms) 7.01.0 Definition 7.01.1 The following items have been determined to be considered part of the team uniform and thus must match the rest of the team: Jersey Top and associated decorations and trim, Shorts base color, Exposed Under Sleeve color

7.02.1 In the event that a player is not dressed in uniform with the rest of the team, the official is to give that player an opportunity to get into uniform or else is AUTOMATICALLY ejected from that game.

...Multiple players on Cornell's roster were in clear violation of this rule. It would be easier to count the number of players who had on different jerseys and shorts as opposed to trying to dissuade the number of players who had uniforms consistent with the aforementioned rule. The officials never told the Cornell players to go change, because the Cornell team never supplied the officials with a copy of the NCBBA rules (I will discuss the matter specific to the officials later).

10.02.0 It is the responsibility of the home team to provide the officials with a copy of the Official NCBBA Rules prior to the start of each game. 10.03.0 The officials MUST be High School certified or higher. 10.03.1 The visiting team reserves the right to request proof of the official's credentials prior to the start of any NCBBA Sanctioned Basketball Game.

...Like previously stated, Cornell never supplied the officials with a copy of the NCBBA rules prior to the game. The officials they brought out to officiate our games were not "High School certified or higher"; the officials even told us before our games started that they were "just intramural officials". They asked the captains to half court before the game and had us explain to them any rules that we thought would be important to know for the games, such as how long each half was and the number of timeouts each team had. The officials didn't even believe that these games counted. They repeatedly said that these games were just scrimmages and "for fun", "not like they count towards anybody's record". During the games, they let the fouls get out of hand to the point where several players had to exit the game with minor injuries, myself included. They were extremely tentative when it came to blowing the whistle. I understand that sometimes there is bias when judging calls and that no official is perfect, but I insist that in this case it was blatant that the officials provided should not have been officiating an NCBBA-level contest. They also assessed technical fouls to any player that attempted to dunk in any of our three games. On one occasion, our coach called a timeout with the purpose being to stop the clock, and the timekeeper wasn't paying attention and let a minute of time run off of the clock, to which the official resolved by saying "I think there was 11:02 on the game clock".



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11.02.0 It is the responsibility of the home team to provide the scorer and timer with a copy of the Official NCBBA Rules prior to the start of each game.

...The home team did not provide the scorekeeper/timer (both of which were players on Cornell's team) with a copy of the official NCBBA rules. There wasn't even a scorebook kept, they just used blank sheets of paper with players' numbers listed. No fouls were kept track of, just one-and-one opportunities, which to me is obscure to say the least. On multiple occasions, the "scorekeeper" credited Cornell points when Niagara had made the shot. This provides evidence to the fact that they clearly were not paying attention throughout our contests. My team even witnessed #3 for Cornell take his jersey off and hand it to the scorekeeper after the second game, and he proceeded to play in the following game. I do not have any proof of that specific player or any player who wore a jersey without a number on it, being eligible on Cornell's official roster. The only proof would be an official scorebook which Cornell can more than likely not provide. This brings their roster eligibility into question. They gave us the numbers of the players that had jerseys with numbers (a total of 13 players), but they had several other players without numbers listed on their "unofficial scorebook" - as seen by the Niagara coach.

19.02.2.1 If the game ends (legal contest) in a protest able situation, the offended team has until all players have left the court to voice its protest intentions. 19.02.2.2 All On Court protests must be made to the Referee. 19.02.2.3 All On Court protests must be reported to the NCBBA (via the NCBBA GAME PROTEST FORM) no later than midnight E.S.T. of the Tuesday following the "NCBBA Week" in which the protested game occurred.

...Our head coach announced to the officials at half time of our second game that we intended to protest all three games. At the conclusion of the third game, some members of the opposing team approached me wanting to reschedule our games. Their reasoning being (verbatim): "We know we didn't have proper officials and that we kind of screwed you guys over, so would you want to reschedule these games at your place with the right officials?" It shouldn't be on us to make up for them inexplicably not following the clear NCBBA rules."

EVIDENCE: (Email from Cornell President Edward Mei to Niagara President Dustin Dorsino on Sat Nov 19th at 7:04 pm)

----- Forwarded message -----
From: Edward Mei <edwardmei96@gmail.com>
Date: Sat, Nov 19, 2016 at 7:04 PM
Subject: Potentially Rescheduling
To: <jks@niagara.edu>
Cc: Dustin Dorsino <ddorsino@mail.niagara.edu>

Hi,

This is Ed from Cornell Club Basketball. First off I just wanted to apologize for the situation today - we recognize that the refs were inadequate and in the future we will be sure to bring certified ones. We also appreciate you guys driving all the way down for these games. But we also hope you can understand our situation. First off, as we talked about, many teams in our league don't adhere strictly to league rules - playing running clock today was also a violation, for example. We definitely understand the frustration but we don't feel that reporting every violation will solve the problem necessarily, rather further exacerbate the frustration between teams. Also, forfeiting these games would almost certainly eliminate us from making it to playoffs.

If you decide to go ahead with the petition, we understand. If you'd like to discuss possibly rescheduling these games, we'd appreciate it immensely.

Regards,

--
Edward Mei
Cornell University '18
(650) 353-0496
edwardmei96@gmail.com



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DEFENSE: (Edward Mei President Cornell Club Basketball)

“Before I offer explanations of their protests, it should be noted that Niagara did not make an On-Court protest to the officials in the capacity that is required by Section 21.02.0 in the NCBBA Rules and Regulations Index. No protest was made during “the time of the action or incident that caused the protest and before play [was] resumed” (Section 21.02.2.3). Play was not stopped, and to my knowledge the referees were not made aware that a protest was being filed. In any case, we were not made aware by the referees that protest was being filed. Rather, we overheard the coach mentioning that they would protest the games to his teammates.

As a club we were financially unable to afford high school certified referees and full uniforms for all of our guys. At Cornell, our club is considered an independent organization and we receive funding through the Student Activities Funding Commission. They fund clubs by placing them in tiers and allocating a limit of funds based on what tier your organization or club is placed in. This semester, we received \$1,000 in total. \$800 of that went to the annual NCBBA dues, which left us \$200 for gas money, uniforms, referees, court space, and everything else – not enough. Also, many of our players on the club basketball team (and I’m sure many others) are players who are on financial aid and so we have difficulty self-funding one another. But we did do our part in trying to acquire outside funding – collecting dues from new members, hosting fundraisers with local restaurants, but that still left us under-budgeted.

So we compromised by hiring IM refs for \$20 a game instead of reaching out to high school officials (~\$94 a game). We spent much of our funds last year buying jersey tops, and spent much of the leftover \$200 this year buying shorts (which have yet to come). I will admit that our referees did miss some calls, but I can objectively say that they were not as blatantly bad as Niagara made them out to be, and definitely would not have affected the outcome of any of the three games. To the point of technical fouls, they only assessed technical fouls to our team so I’m confused as to why Niagara brought it up.

All but two or three guys had on the same jerseys – the guys that didn’t had on jerseys from previous years, all with Cornell in white placed on a red base. Most guys wore black and red shorts. Realistically, our uniforms did not affect the games at all. We felt these were reasonable options given our circumstances.

Finally, while we didn’t print out an official rulebook, we clearly explained the rules to the referees beforehand and, as Dustin mentioned himself, the refs even asked players to clarify any questions they had about the rules. The point made about one player handing a jersey to the scorekeeper is irrelevant – he put on a jersey for show but never played.”

NCBBA RULES RELEVANT TO THIS INVESTIGATION:

8.00.00 (Uniforms)

8.01.0 Definition

8.01.1 The following items have been determined to be considered part of the team uniform and thus must match the rest of the team: Jersey Top and associated decorations and trim, Shorts base color, Exposed Under Sleeve color.

8.01.2 The following items have been determined to be exempt from having to match the



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rest of team: Shorts decorations and trim, Sock color/style, Shoe color/style,
Head/Arm Bands, Shooting Sleeve color.

8.02.0 Penalty

8.02.1 In the event that a player is not dressed in uniform with the rest of the team, the official is to give that player an opportunity to get into uniform or else is AUTOMATICALLY ejected from that game.

11.00.00 (Officials)

11.01.0 During **NCBBA Sanctioned Basketball Games**, the home team is responsible for providing officials for each competition.

11.02.0 It is the responsibility of the home team to provide the officials with a copy of the Official NCBBA Rules prior to the start of each game.

11.03.0 The officials MUST be High School certified or higher.

11.03.1 The visiting team reserves the right to request proof of the officials credentials prior to the start of any **NCBBA Sanctioned Basketball Game**.

11.04.0 It is required that the home team schedules two officials (1 Referee and 1 Umpire) to officiate each competition.

11.04.1 The game may be played provided that at least one approved official is present.

12.00.00 (Scorer's Table)

12.01.0 During **NCBBA Sanctioned Basketball Games**, the home team is responsible for providing 1 Scorer and 1 Timer for each competition.

12.02.0 It is the responsibility of the home team to provide the scorer and timer with a copy of the Official NCBBA Rules prior to the start of each game.

12.03.0 The Scorer and Timer DO NOT have to hold any certification.

21.00.00 (Protests)

21.01.0 No protest ever shall be permitted on judgment decisions by the Officials.

21.02.0 On Court Protests

21.02.1 On Court Protests consists of protests regarding Uniform Violations, Equipment Violations, Official decisions believed to be in violation of NCBBA rules, Official Qualifications, and ALL Roster Violations.

21.02.2 Any On Court protest by the coach of a competing team must be made at the time of the action or incident that caused the protest and before play is resumed.

21.02.2.1 If the game ends (legal contest) in a protest able situation, the offended team has until all players have left the court to voice its protest intentions.

21.02.2.2 All On Court protests must be made to the Referee.

21.02.2.3 All On Court protests must be reported to the NCBBA (via the NCBBA GAME PROTEST FORM) no later than midnight E.S.T. of the Tuesday following the "NCBBA Week" in which the protested game occurred.

21.02.3 When a coach claims that an official's decision violates NCBBA rules, the Referee must: (1) allow the coach the right to file a protest; (2) announce to each



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coach, to the official scorer and to the public-address announcer that the game is being played under protest, and (3) note and record the game situation at the time of the protest. No replay of any part of a game will be allowed even if the protest is proven to be legitimate, if the play in question did not directly affect the outcome of the game. If the protest is proven to be legitimate and could have had a bearing upon the game, then it is upheld and play resumes from the point of the protest.

21.02.4 When a coach questions the validity that an opposing player is actually the player on the roster who he claims to be, that coach may request that the Referee have the player in question produce a photo ID.

21.02.4.1 In the event that the player in question is unable to produce a photo ID, then the game may be played under protest by the opposition as an On Court Protest.

INVESTIGATION:

The NCBBA reached out to both officials and received statements from both. Official #1 (M. Pomarico) stated: He heard Niagara openly airing their complaints but nothing was stated to him directly. He also stated that after the games, that Niagara spoke to Danni Ford (Cornell Rec Center Building Coordinator) about their intent to protest the game. Official #2 (N. Swenson) stated: Niagara never made him aware that they planned to protest any of the games.

The NCBBA spoke to Danni Ford who stated: “The only interaction I had with the coach was when I filled out an accident report for one of their players who asked for ice. He asked if it was necessary because it didn't happen here and I said yes it is our policy, then he just carried on coaching the game. There was nothing in regards of protesting. “

The NCBBA spoke to Billy Clingersmith (Niagara Head Coach) who stated: “Before the first game started, I informed officials that the games would be under protest due to a violation in league rules. The protest was a result of the officials informing me that they were uncertified official.”

RULING:

There are major discrepancies in the stories issued by all parties involved. Niagara’s coach says the intent to protest was announced before the start of game 1, the Niagara President says it was announced at half time of Game 2, Cornell’s president says no intent to protest was announced, Cornell’s uncertified officials state that no intent to protest was announced until after the games and not to them but the facility manager who stated that to be untrue. The NCBBA is proceeding under the assumption that Niagara’s intent to protest was announced at half time of game 2 and that the games were being protest due to the lack of proper certifications by the officials hired by Cornell.



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Since NCBBA Rule 21.02.1 classifies protests regarding the qualification of officials to be an “ON COURT PROTEST”, NCBBA Rule 21.02.2 requires that the coach of the offended team must announce his intent to protest directly to the Referee at the time of the action or incident that caused the protest and before play is resumed. Since the Niagara coach has declared that he was informed of the lack of appropriate certifications of the officials prior to the start of Game 1 and the NCBBA is declaring that intent to protest wasn’t announced until half time of game 2, the NCBBA has no choice but to deny Niagara’s protests of Games 1 and 2 of the series because the intent to protest was not announced at the time of the incident which caused the protest (discovering that the officials were uncertified). The scores for games 1 and 2 will remain as reported.

However since the NCBBA views that Niagara’s declaration of intent to protest for uncertified officials for game 3 took place before the start of game 3, and that no one has disputed that Cornell hired officials that do not meet the minimum qualifications requires as set forth in the NCBBA rules by the NCBBA member teams. The NCBBA is ruling in favor of Niagara’s protest of game 3. Game 3 will become a forfeit win for Niagara with a score of (2-0).

DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

During this investigation, it has become quite apparent that Cornell Club Basketball has minimal regards to the rules set forth in the NCBBA Rules which were put into place by the member teams of the NCBBA. These rules have been discussed, voted upon, and approved in order to provide the NCBBA with a fair structure by which all teams will compete and thus bring legitimacy to the NCBBA as a true collegiate basketball league. Cornell’s failure to attempt to play by these rules damages the reputation of the NCBBA and how it’s viewed a collegiate basketball league to all those who follow and participate. The NCBBA views this lack of respect for the NCBBA rules as “conducting the basketball operations of their team in a manner not considered acceptable by NCBBA standards.” and thus Cornell Club Basketball will be placed on probation for the remainder of the 2016-17 NCBBA season as per NCBBA Rule 22.01.0. See below for a list of disciplinary restrictions that accompany being on probation:

22.05.0 A team placed on probation will NOT be eligible for the early payment discount off the annual dues.

22.06.0 Players and Coaches on a team that is currently on probation are INELIGIBLE for any Conference, Region, or National award recognition of either the weekly or seasonal variety. (I.e. All American, All Region, All Conference, MVP, Player of the Week, etc.)

22.07.0 A team on season long probation will not have their probationary status lifted until June 30th of that season.

NOTES:

NCBBA Rules (including rules on how to protest a game) have been strategically adopted by the member teams of the NCBBA over the years. It is imperative that all teams follow these rules in order for the league to consistently build upon its reputation as a true collegiate basketball league. It is important to realize that games must be declared under protest at the moment a rules infraction has been identified. This has been adopted for 2



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specific reasons; first, so that teams can't wait to determine the result of the game and then air their grievances (aka sour grapes) and second, to allow the infracting team an opportunity to fix the rule violation so that the contest(s) can continue legally within the confines of the NCBBA rules. As always teams who feel that the rules of the NCBBA should be changed are invited to propose and debate potential rules changes at the NCBBA Annual league meeting.

Sandy Sanderson

President
National Club Basketball Association