

Airborne Shooter in Slow-Motion

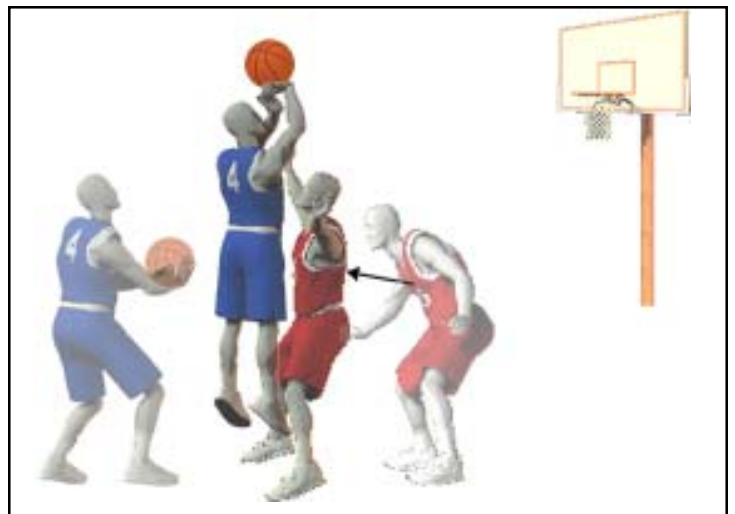
Catchphrases such as “protect the shooter,” “referee the defense,” “legal guarding position as it pertains to the airborne shooter,” “take it in the torso,” and “the defender didn’t have two feet on the floor” are familiar sayings for the official to contemplate when ruling “is it a block, or is it a player control foul?”

In advance of the dribbler’s feet leaving the floor, the defender must have obtained a legal guarding position with both feet on the floor facing the dribbler. Once the dribbler becomes airborne, the distance necessary for the airborne shooter to return to the floor must be unimpeded by the defender. Time and distance is not a factor. No matter how far or how extreme the distance may appear, the airborne shooter is entitled to whatever distance is necessary to land.



The defender has obtained a legal guarding position with both feet on the floor in the path of the player in control before the act of shooting begins.

Once the airborne player, in the act of shooting, leaves the floor, said player is authorized to utilize or make use of any distance necessary to return to the floor unhindered. The defender in this segment has moved forward after the player in control was in the air.



This segment illustrates that after the player with the ball was in the air, the defender moved forward, giving insufficient distance, thus preventing an unimpeded return to the floor by the airborne player. Under these circumstances, although the airborne player landed on the defender and caused the contact, and the defender had both feet on the floor “set in cement,” and had taken the contact squarely in the chest, the responsibility and subsequent foul is clearly on the defender.

