



Abbott's Tips for Faceoffs

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Veteran NCAA and MLL official Tom Abbott tackled faceoffs at the 2013 US Lacrosse National Convention, presented by Champion.

1. Avoid the "I" formation.

Don't be on the same plane as the bench and single-side officials. You want different angles. Stagger positions along the midline or circle the faceoff.

2. Learn to talk with a whistle in your mouth

Players will otherwise anticipate your hand-to-mouth motion and predict your cadence.

3. Place the ball on the spot you'll use.

It need not always be directly at center.

4. Stand with your back to the goal that was just scored upon.

This is protocol.

5. Note which players come out for the faceoff.

Any past history? What moves do they use?

6. Stand over the ball until your partners signal "good to go."

Establish signals beforehand.

7. Step out from the ball into the area that vies you the best vantage point.

Get a clear view of hands and stick heads, but give yourself enough space to avoid injury (3 yards maximum).

8. Note trends.

Has someone won several straight faceoffs? Why? What direction has the ball gone?

9. Note time left on the clock

If fewer than 10 seconds remain, faceoff men might anticipate the officials' movement toward the goal and take advantage.

10. Clearly signal and verbalize possession.

Release players to avoid confusion



Teach to Learn – Lucia Perfetti Clark

Frank Oppenheimer was a world-renowned physicist and University of Colorado professor, who as a result of McCarthyism, was blackballed from teaching in the 1950s before settling at a Colorado high school in 1957.

Imaging knowing a subject that intricately and trying to teach it to a high school kid. It's the difference between knowledge and understanding. Being able to interpret a subject you've mastered for a new learner gives a unique perspective.

November marks the beginning of training season for new and returning officials. Every active official in every association should find a way to participate in training. Whether you assist in the classroom, take the lead on a topic or participate in on-field training and observation, being on this side of the learning dynamic will make you a better official.

Can you see yourself in the students in front of you? Can you see their understanding as a progression?

When certain concepts or verbiage stumps new officials, how will your explanation help them?
Can you develop a way to understand a rule or mechanic that could not just help your students, but all students of the game?

When you think this deeply about your skills and profession, the next time a coach barks out a similar question during a timeout, you will be prepared with answers.