

February 24, 1945.

S/Sgt. Arthur E. Sanderson, 17028611,
210 West Market,
Warrensburg, Missouri.

Dear Sergeant Sanderson:

The referee is the superior officer of the game. He is to use his judgment in regard to the situation. However, he cannot overrule facts in the case. Unless there was immutable evidence, the referee could not do other than to follow the scorekeepers findings. However, if in the judgment of the referee, there could have been some faulty scorekeeping, then the referee would have the power to decide even though the scorekeeper's findings might be contrary to the referee's decision.

The rules of the game are that when there is a dispute over the score, all other things being equal, the referee shall decide in favor of the smaller score; and when there is an argument over the playing time, all other things being equal, the referee shall decide in favor of the longer playing time.

That gives you the angles on these two playing situations. Instead of deciding on a three minute overtime, the rules say a five minute overtime, and that is what should have been done. It seems to me perfectly patent that after the referee and officials decided in favor of a three minute overtime and the game was played on that basis, the referee would have been perfectly within his rights to have said that "we have decided on this, and this is it."

Sergeant Sanderson, it is entirely up to the kind of a referee you have. If he was a forceful character and knew the rules well enough not to be swayed by someone coming in at the eleventh hour, then I think it could have been decided and should have been decided in favor of the 36-30 score. Had I been the referee, I would have said to the scorer, "Since we have agreed on this and you did not report your findings to me prior to this agreement, then you must stand on the agreement and we cannot go back on that score."

I do not know whether I have helped you or hindered the other fellow, but that is exactly what I would have decided. If a fellow is a referee, after all, he must be a referee. It is a ball or a strike when the ball goes over the plate, just when it happened, and a second or two longer will not make any difference.

Very sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education,
Varsity Basketball Coach.