



By EARL WATT

• Leader & Times

A recent call in the Kansas-Iowa State game has been considered a game-changer, and the Big 12 issued a statement that errors were made.

For many, this seemed to be a revelation and vindication that the Jayhawks did not legitimately win.

I have spent the better part of 20 years along the sideline covering everything from girls volleyball, national championship basketball, softball, football, little league and more, and I have yet to attend any game where some call was not questioned by someone.

**4th
& GOAL**



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The officiating fraternity likes to criticize me when I point out a questionable call in a story, but it is not a criticism of the job more than it is a realization of the imperfect art that it is.

Did the ball really get spotted where the player went down?

Was the runner really out at first?

Why didn't they call reaching in on this side of the court like they did on that side?

Even on instant replay, officials sometimes can't make a determination.

The sideline commentators like to throw in their two cents, and almost every game has the famous quote, "Im not so sure about that call."

There is no such thing as a perfectly called game any more than there is a perfect game on the mound (although there might have been one more if first base umpire Jim Joyce wouldn't have botched the call in a Detroit vs. Cleveland game in 2010).

They happen, but they are rare.

And that is not a repudiation of officials but an admission of the difficulty of the job.

No one call really affects the outcome, especially in basketball.

Night after night you can watch players and coaches in a constant dialogue with the officials, trying to plead their case and influence favorable calls for their team or tighter calls on the opponent.

In the end, you can only hope to have an official who is unbiased, knowledgeable about the game, and calls it consistent.

Are they going to miss a call? Sure they are. Are they going to make a call that some feel they shouldn't? Absolutely.

They will be taunted, abused, threatened, have their eyesight questioned, and all for a few bucks a game.

Calls are questioned all night long, so which one will you pick that made the difference?