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**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Well hello and welcome to the weekly podcast from the Huffines Institute for Sports Medicine and Human Performance here at Texas A&M University. I am your host Tim Lightfoot and I am so pleased that you took the time to download us and you are listening. Every week we bring you interesting people in the world of Sports Medicine and Human Performance and sometimes in general health, and this week is no exception. We have with Dr. Michael Thornton with us, who is an Assistant Clinical Professor here in Health and Kinesiology welcome to the podcast, Michael.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Glad to be here, thank you for having me.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** I am going to tell the audience a little bit about you and kind of give us an intro as to why we are here. Dr. Thornton has a variety of different academic degrees. He has a master's degree in Sports Administration and Coaching from Northwestern State University in Louisiana, which was a counterpoint to where I graduated in Louisiana. He went on and got an Ed.D in Physical Education, Sports Management and Coaching from Texas A&M and he has been here for, how many years?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I think I am working on sixteen years now.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Sixteen years, at one point he was an assistant men's basketball coach at Northwestern so he has been on the coaching side of things and we have brought him here to talk to us about his experiences as a basketball official because he is certified and officiates both at the high school level and collegial level, division 1 collegial level so welcome.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Glad to be here.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Yeah so you know today, if you have any jokes about officials that you would like to use, Mike you are more than welcome to. I will say that; tell the audience that he did wear his glasses today so I am sure you will hear that a lot right?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I do. I try not to wear these during games.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** So, let's just start off. What mentality do you embrace while officiating?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I guess it goes into the same mentality that I took into my coaching, when I was coaching and the academic field that I am involved in. I approach every game, wanting to go out and give my best interests, you know one of the things we say in our little pre game, our officials get together and we say that we want to be the best team on the court, that we want to work harder than the other two teams that are working, that is our primary mentality is that when we leave the court, we leave knowing that we have given our best efforts to those kids.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** And I think probably a great goal for officials is to, and I refereed high school basketball for awhile and it's that you don't want people to notice you, if they don't know you were there then you basically succeeding to some extent.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Yeah you want to go in there, you want the kids to play the game, we're actually a very critical part of the game I think is one of the things I have learned since I have become an official is how important a role that is so you are involved in the game but you want the kids to dictate and determine what goes on in the court, you're just there to judicate the rules.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** And we talked to a guy named Jon Wertheim that wrote a book a couple years ago but he talked a lot in that book about good officials know when to make the call and when to stay out of the game and do you find that as well?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Yeah and I think what happens is you move up in the levels, I know for me I started quite frankly in the officiating game quite late. I was in my early 30's when I started officiating and now you see that people beginning this as early as 17, 18 years old. I worked with guys that were in their 20's that have been refereeing division 1 basketball for a few years already but as I moved up from junior high to high school, from girls to boys, from small college to bigger college you see sometimes it is easier to stay out of the way as the players get a little bit better. It is actually easier to officiate the game and kind of step back and let the plays happen.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** I was watching a game on TV last night and I was amazed at how much they were letting go, it was a major college game and you know a couple of top ranked teams.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** And typically when you have two eagerly matched teams it is much easier you can see where there was a bump here and did it create a disadvantage and if it didn't they were gonna go ahead and continue. I will tell you that is a topic of debate among officials going on right now especially at the collegial level is that at what point do you referee straight from the rule book and at what point do you allow sensitive activity to come into the game and I don't know which way is the best way. I know for me I am more comfortable when I am able to look at a play and in my mind say that was

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**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Advantageous or disadvantageous based on the rules not based on what happened with the play but on the rules state that that was illegal contact so, blow the whistle, which is much easier when you do it that way.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Well to some extent, as physical as the game is nowadays if you called everything the game would be four hours long.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** We would like to get home at a decent time. I had a game last night, we drove to a high school playoff game in North Tyler, the game started at seven, the game finished

about ten minutes to nine, it was a long game there was a lot of fowling. One team was better than the other, so in the second half we mostly had junior varsity players playing, trying to get their minutes they haven't played much all year, there were a lot of fowls, a lot of substituting in and out. And you have to call those because you still got to get the plays that matter you can't not blow your whistle or bad things happen.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** True, well what made you take the jump from coaching to officiating?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I came here and was doing some coaching on a volunteer basis with a group here in town and we had a good group of kids and I helped coach those kids and then that group of kids, that core group of kids that we had all graduated and I was kind of looking for something else to do and I teach a coaching basketball methods course and in that class one day we were talking about officials and based on my coaching experience I told them that I could successfully defend the fact that the Darwinian theory of survival of the fittest was not accurate. Because I have never seen an official that can run, who could see, who could hear so those people would not exist if that theory was accurate and one of my students happened to be an official and he came up to me after class and said now coach that is a little harsh you should the very least come and try it out and quite frankly from that conversation I went to a meeting, became part of the local association and starting officiating at that point.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** So how does work? I mean people see the officials on TV but they have no clue how that works. Is that how that works? You start off with a local association and then you kind of move up?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Most, and in today's world probably over the last ten years , frankly right before I got involved with the collegial officiating there was a process of camps now but in the past I've taught with people mostly the grey hairs that you see on TV. Those guys got involved in the game possibly from never even having done high school. Someone just saw them at a rec league or something and they just moved up the ranks quickly, but now there is a systematic approach that I quite frankly spend money on every summer, I go to camps I get critiqued by officials

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** So they have officiating camps?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Tons of them.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Really?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** It is, I won't go into the details of it but it is a big business, for those guys it is a big business and I will spend quite a bit of money to go to these camps to get critiqued, but on the other side of that if I get picked up by some of these leagues there is money in it for me as well, I can make that money back working some of these college games.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** So these specific leagues and they basically scout out officials and they say, Mike we're gonna put you on our roster that we call?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Correct so , in particular right now I am on the South and Conference roster so there is gentlemen in Curtis Shaw and if you know anything about basketball officiators you can Google him and he is an interesting character to look at because he is well known for I think most famous the way is the Temple mascot so he has ejected mascots but he is a tremendous supervisor I really enjoy being under him but he supervises for the south and conference, the Ohio valley conference, Conference USA and The Big Twelve and he sort of created the system where he brings in new officials in the Southland, trains them, grooms them and hopes that they move into The Big Twelve ranks as those guys kind of move out, same thing with the other side, Ohio valley kind of feeds into Conference USA.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** So now when you go to a game, do they keep you from refereeing games here close to College Station or do they purposely send you away or?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I think that the primary intent is that you don't engage with any schools that you have an affiliation with so for instance, Northwestern State that would try to stay away from them, especially in any kind of conference play, I have refereed some of their games but it was preseason exhibition. A&M games I have done some exhibition games but I would not want to work a home game there are too many students of mine and I wouldn't want to deal with that. Schools that you have an affiliation with you want to stay away from just because of the perception you don't want to create a perception that there could be something going on there.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Yeah is there a lot of travel involved?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Lots of travel.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Lots of travel?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Yeah

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** And they pay for all that right? Like this isn't coming out of your pocket?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** There is a flat fee, so you get paid a flat fee and you then take care of your travel and expenses based off of whatever that fee is

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So I have been to South Louisiana twice this year already. I have got one more trip to go and I choose to either fly or drive. If I drive I leave midday on one day and come back by three I am back in by three or four o'clock the next morning after the game just drive in and drive back.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Are the officials that you call with are they from similar distances?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** They are from all over, yeah. I worked a game, the last game I worked I had an official from, I was from Texas, there was a guy from Kentucky and a guy from Arkansas.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Wow

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** We were working in South Louisiana

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Wow. The one from Kentucky had a long way to go

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** He came a long ways,

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Wow, so do you know most of the folks that you call games with?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I am probably acquainted with most of those guys, but the crew I had this last week was the first time I ever called a game with him.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** I mean that is a question I had when you watch some of the basketball games do these officials know each other

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Well the games you are watching on TV, those officials, the first thing you have to understand is those guys, it is not a full time job but it really is, those guys are probably working 70-100 games a year and that is 3, 4 times a night and they're interacting the same groups so they see each other quite a bit, they have been doing it for a long time so they know each other pretty well.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Right, you're still working your way up the rank

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Still working. Yeah

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Well what is a dilemma that you have had to face while officiating? Something that sticks out in your mind?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Well at a high school game not too far long ago, we had a high school game and there is this talk about concussions and those kind of things and probably the scariest moments to me were we were at a girls basketball game and actually it was a local game and had a young lady went to the basket and there was no foul in the play it was just one of those, as we refer to in the game, an innoverted contact, it was just, the girl went to the floor her head hit first. I happened to be working with a guy that day that works for the local fire department and we kind of moved in quickly to her and he looks at her and he just kind of glanced to me and shook his head and she was unconscious, laying on the floor we immediately get the people to come out and the coaches come out and staff come out and delayed the game for about ten or fifteen minutes and that is a very sobering moment when you're standing there watching it so from that perspective of it that was kind of one of the more, those moments you don't like at all. There are tons of stories about being approached by fans or being approached by coaches, those

kinds of things so probably the one that I enjoy telling the most was I was working a little dribbler's game

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Little dribblers?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Little dribblers. So these are, this group was like six seven year olds, girls.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Wow, okay.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** And we're in a city not too far from here and I make a call, a big girl falls into a little girl, falls to the floor, the little girl falls to the floor and there is no whistle and I am kind of watching and the next thing I know I feel something kind of, I feel it coming up behind me and I turn around and look and there is grandpa with his cane and he is out on the court and he is coming after me due to my cat like quickness he was not able to get me but we have those moments as well. So I don't do little dribblers anymore just because of the threats, I don't like the canes.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** What are your favorite parts about officiating?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I think there are two things, one I like the game of basketball I just love having an opportunity to play in college. I didn't play any high school sports, I got a chance to play in college and that just really developed my love for the game. I had some good quality teaching, the games were very good to me. I had an opportunity to do things and go places I couldn't have gone otherwise so I love the game and that helps me stay involved in the game without the pressure of wondering about eligibility and who is and all that stuff so the coaching aspect. I can control when I want to be gone when I want to be home. The second thing is the comradery that we develop there is still that locker room mentality if you played on a team then you know there is something about teammates, but some of my best friends now are guys that I have met through officiating and I have got guys all over the country that I can call if I needed something that would be there for me.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** And that comradery is important it makes you feel like you are a part of something big

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Absolutely

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** You are in your zone and we should say I just forgot to mention this in the introduction; you did play against Shaquille O'Neil in college.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I did.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** So you're talking about the love of the basketball game.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Yeah I had some, he can refute these stories because he has no idea who I am but the story I like to tell is that we really sort of dominated that match up and the scant three minutes I was in the game playing against him and yeah, he was a big boy.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Still is

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Still is.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** So you know I think the question that I certainly have is when I watch games is how do officials handle angry coaches and angry players, because you certainly have direct interaction with those folks

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**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Yeah I teach some basketball courses here and I make my classes officiate during our classes, I want them to get a feel for that but what I tell them is that to me basketball officiating is nothing more than just having good communication skills just understanding how to communicate and obviously we all communicate in different ways and what I will tell you is different officials will react and respond to coaches acting out in different ways. At the high school level, we have been given some tools where if a coach kind of acts out we can warn them, give a verbal warning walk over, and record it in the book and coach that is your warning. If it goes anything beyond that then everyone knows and there is a technical foul, which is just a tool that we have to address coaches, at the collegiate level I think I know where you are going with this at the collegiate level even I watch, I hear the messages and memos that I get from the supervisors and the director of officiating. I see those memos, I read those memos, and then I watch games on TV and you see coaches acting in ways that we're being told to address. Now I have not been in one of those TV games, so I can't tell you how I would respond to that but it is a challenge when you have a coach who is at a certain level and you have an official at a certain level and they are telling you to address that coach and you wonder if you address that is your actions going to be reinforced or supported.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Right

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** It is a challenge

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Will you be blackballed?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** That is exactly right

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** My impression is, and I guess one of the things I learned many years ago. Some of these coaches will do this stuff on purpose they are trying to work the officials

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Absolutely. They are competitors they are trying to get any advantages they can if they go somewhere and I am with it. I know I have got a game coming up and it is me, another veteran guy and a young guy and it's his first year. He is gonna get worked and we

are gonna have to do a good job of letting him learn on his own but at the same time the coaches know that is enough you can't get an advantage.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** When is enough, enough from coaches?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** My line is if you number one if you personally say something to me like me like Mike you, then that is going to lead we are going to address that issue. Anytime you address integrity you hear the words you are screwing us, I am not your kid missed a free throw that is not my fault, so anytime we hear that or every time you come here you cheat us we are going to address that immediately because quite frankly I never go into a game wondering or caring about who wins or who loses that is not part of my obligation.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Yeah. Do you have places that you don't want to go? I won't ask you to name those?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Actually there are some situations that it's not necessarily environmental stuff but I typically try to stay away from places if I have been to a game, to a particular gym and the coach and I have had an issue or maybe I have teed the coach up and it was just sort of confrontational, if I have had an issue with a couple of players on that team, I will stay away from there just because as a coach I would understand if that official walks in, the player seem, the coaches seem and it changes the context of that environment so I would just stay away from that there are plenty of other places I can go so I just stay out of it so we don't have that situation potentially come up.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Do you have much of an issue with angry players?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I remember from my playing days I would get pissed at the ref but it was like as a player you leave the ref alone. I don't mind players reacting in a respectful manner, you can turn around and say Mr. Official that was a terrible call and if you do it the right way I am okay with that, what we can't handle is I will not have one player going to another player, if I see any of that we are going to take care of that and I will address a player too I will bring him over and say hey come on, I have even gone to a player before did you hit him? 23 did you hit him on the arm? No Mr. Ref I didn't I said dad-gummit I missed that didn't I? and just let them know that we're there we can talk but I think part of our job is to help them learn accountability as well if they go beyond the where they're supposed to be then we are going to hold them accountable for their actions.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Yeah, by the way I like your sly mention of Michael Jordan's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday when you recognized jersey number 23 there, right?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Absolutely.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Do fans ever get really annoying?



**Dr. Michael Thornton.** It is funny how you don't hear fans very much. I think you get to a point where if you are focused enough that stuff is just kind of background noise you don't pay much attention to it. Now I have had some situations where I had and number one I would never remove a fan from an establishment. I would have game management or someone else do that because it creates to I don't want it to be about me. They have to go but I have had some games where I had to do that, I had a game where my co-official said a guy came on the court chasing me I didn't even know he was coming on the court they stopped the game that kind of stuff.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Did he have a cane?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** He did not have a cane; he was a little bit more nimble.

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**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I have had police escorts out of gyms those sorts of things but that is just, you understand that is part of the environment you go into. Now I will say occasionally you get a fan that you hear that you just go well that's pretty good. I had a guy tell me one time it was at a tournament game and there is nobody in the gym, maybe seven people there and there is a call and I hear this I have seen a one-eyed or a blind Cyclops referee better than that and you just run down the court and you kind of process that for a little bit now that is really good so I go back to the floor and I kind of make eye contact with him and I go that's good, that's really good he kind of grins and laughs and we just move on from there.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Yeah.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** For the most part if a fan gets to the point where they are distracting players they are intentionally yelling at players we are going to address that, we are going to have game administration take care of that problem, but if they're yelling at me or one of my co-officials you know.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Does the crowd in generally influence referees? I mean we were at a ballgame here the other night where the crowd really got into it and there were a couple of calls that could be disputed and all of the sudden you have got 7,000 people hollering at you.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Well I think there is something to that, I think there is, I don't know I am sure there is some research somewhere that can indicate the contextual dependency kind of has an influence on that, what we hope is that we are trained good enough and that we are experienced enough that we minimize the impact that that can have and what I do know is that the crowd can influence coaches, coaches can influence the crowd, the crowd can influence the coaches and they tend to react emotionally to each other.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Yeah

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** That is one of the reasons we try not to let coaches get demonstrative because once they become gesture the crowd gets excited and more animated and it is easier to get distracted from what you're trying to do

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Yeah and we saw a ballgame with a coach it was one of the women's games where one of the opposing coaches was really good at stomping her foot, quite a bit you know bad call and she was over there stomping her foot and number one you think geez are you ten years old but

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Well I have had those thoughts too about coaches you know with some things you just wonder sometimes the comments they come up with and I had a guy tell me the other day, he was accurate, and he said this is my profession he was talking about his coaching profession. You have another job. Well coach you are right but tonight, right now this is my job, this is my profession and I am giving you the best effort that I can and we may agree or disagree on how good that effort is and that is fine, but one of the things I would say as an official is we want to leave every game knowing we worked as hard as we could and we were as consistent as we could be. One of the stories I had a game and actually one of my colleagues here, Dr. Singer was in that game as well

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** We did a podcast with him about race relationships

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** He is actually a very good official he is doing very well. But he, myself and another guy were in a game and it was a pretty heated game. Gentlemen from one of the teams I know the guy very well I go running by his bench and he kind of looks up at me and says Mike I just want you to know you will never work at our place again and I was like well coach that is fine, that is okay there are plenty of places that they will send me and that is fine there are plenty of people that come to your place that is not a problem, go back down to the other end and the coach on the other end stops me. Mike I just want you to know this might be the worst officiated game I have ever had and he is up by 14 at the time by the way and I just stop and say coach I am okay with that. The gentleman on the other end just told me the same thing and I am fine with that at the very least we have been consistent.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** On both ends.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Whether it was good or bad we don't know but we were consistent and that is what you want to leave every game knowing that both teams got a fair opportunity.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** What would you tell people to remember when they want to criticize the official?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I think there are two things. Number one from official I have to remember that they have got something invested in that emotionally. Especially if you are at a high school game there is parents, there are fans so they have an emotional investment in what

goes on in the court and as the official I don't, I have got to remain detached from that, now that is the first thing as an official I have to remember that that they are gonna react to some things and I have to be careful how I respond or how I react back to them. Coaches and players are a little bit different, but fans you have to understand that as an official I also understand that most fans don't know the game, they don't understand the rules, I didn't know the rules when I started playing when I started officiating I thought I did come to find out I didn't know very much at all

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** And most people would think they do know the rules

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** They do and we could probably go through some stuff and they probably don't but what I would tell my students actually is we would go over the rules and stuff in class and I would tell them go heckle officials that is fine I have no problem with that as a fan that is part of your right to do, your job right? But let's do it in a knowledgeable manner so now when you heckle officials I give them terminology to use you know and we talk about angles bad angle ref, because that's the talk we use. I think the biggest thing is to understand that officials, I have never personally, I can say this, I have never been with an official

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**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Who intentionally made a call to favor one team over another?

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Right

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Now we may make calls that have that perception but I have never had an official that intentionally did that, we don't really care who wins the game.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Kind of our last topic, and you just brought this up, what is the most misunderstood rule? The one that most people maybe think they know but they don't.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** I think the most common one that people, I speak to my students about, the most common ones are the travel ones, that I would say as an official number one is the hardest thing to call people say to charge but if you charge you're gonna get it either right or wrong you either make it or don't make it

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** You got a 50% chance

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** But the travel is tough because the games change so much with the influx of European players. The way that kids play today is different than the ways in the past

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** People would say traveling is two steps, it should be pretty easy.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** It should be

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** How has the game changed that makes it more difficult?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** It's bigger, stronger, and faster at every level. Girls games, guys games, college game, the players are bigger, stronger, faster that means my first initial look when the player catches the basketball I try to find a pivot foot but then I am looking at the contact, is there a foul because most coaches want to foul because they want to travel so that is the concept. So they are moving through a mass of people and you are trying to discover was it one step, two steps did they jump? Stop? Did they pivot did they lift a foot because you can take left right and as long as the left doesn't come back again you can put the right up so there is a lot that goes into that, was the ball in control do they have position, was there an established pivot? The most common is a kid jumps, the ball is really small, the kid runs and dives on the ball and slides twelve feet and stops, everyone screams travel, travel, travel but it is not because he doesn't establish a pivot until he stops now it could be left cheek, it could be right cheek?

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Depends on what part of their body he is pivoted on

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** And at that point now we have the potential for a travel to take place but if they dribble to stand up there is no traveling and that is a common one

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Yeah there is also one, I have seen it recently where kids will bat the ball around, one kid will bat it around and grab it with both hands and start dribbling again and the first thought it double dribble but it is like

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Well you must have control so if I control the ball and I put it to the floor that is one dribble, then if I lose it again I fumble it I can pick it up again. But if I fumble it and it goes to the ground and then I can continue it from there so there is that fumble dribble fumble kind of deal

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Yeah interesting stuff. Well I am getting the sign that we are running out of time. It has really been great to have you here. What would be your take home message?

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Well I think there is two things one, for me, for other people I don't know what it is but I think for me it is that it is every time I approach a game of basketball the first thing I consider is that it is not about me, it is not about my crew, it is about those kids on the court. We want them to have the best experience that they can have. Did a playoff game last night, one of the teams lost that was it there was about four seniors that is the last high school basketball game they are gonna play. Now that is important that we go out and give them great effort on that and I think that is so implacable in other things that we do like when I am out there officiating I am also a mentor and a role model on occasions for kids and sometimes I am the one that has to step in and judicate and be the authority figure and discipline but I have to do that in a way that is positive and not a reactionary in some of the things that they might be doing so the big idea would be that if we are talking about from officiating perspective is that they're human, they are gonna make mistakes accept that going in, still yell at them, there is nothing wrong with that but just accept the fact that officials are gonna make mistakes and they don't care who beats who.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Right

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** And that is one thing to take away I guess.

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** That is another one of those aspects of the game.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Right. Part of the game

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Thank you again for being with us today.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Sure

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** We didn't even get to talk about your day job so we will have to bring you back to talk to you about your day job at some point. And thank you all for listening today as always we have our take home podcast T-shirt question and here with the question today is Sheryl.

**Sheryl.** What is one way an official can penalize a coach for unnecessary actions?

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** Great question Sheryl and be the first person to email us the correct answer to that to [HuffinesPodcast@hlkn.tamu.edu](mailto:HuffinesPodcast@hlkn.tamu.edu) and you will win one of those nifty podcast T-Shirts. Don't hesitate but don't ever think that your answer is too late to send us an answer whenever you have got it. Again thanks for being with us Mike, sure enjoyed it.

**Dr. Michael Thornton.** Sure, my pleasure

**Dr. Tim Lightfoot.** And again thank you all for taking the time to download us and listen this week until next week we will have another interesting person in sports medicine and human performance with us, we hope that you stay active and healthy.

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