

What You Need to Know About Announcing

By Dominic Hoscher

Before the Broadcast

1. Research a night or two in advance in order to become more familiar with teams, players, etc.
2. Find a method that works for you, makes memorizing/distributing information easier
3. Gather background information from players, coaches, something like that
4. Make yourself familiar with rules of the sport you're broadcasting
5. Talk to your partner sometime before the game
6. Make sure you can pronounce the names. Even the last people off the bench.

Announcing the Game - Opening

1. Create a plan with your partner so they know what to expect
2. If you struggle with intros, write yours out
3. Do not mention all of the things you researched in the first 10 minutes of a broadcast, spread it out throughout the game
4. Set the stage: Who's playing, the lineups, where at, records, who's heading what direction, even who's wearing what
5. Find the theme of the game, or establish a storyline. Whether it's a rivalry game, playoff, something else, and stick with that theme throughout the entirety of a broadcast
6. Get your notes and player names into a position where you can easily see them

Announcing the Game - During the Action

1. Talk about your background gatherings periodically throughout games, preferably during slow moments
2. Show enthusiasm in your calls, from the big plays to the highlight reel ones, match the play's excitement
3. Mention co-announcers name often to give off that conversation feel in your broadcast
4. Don't just read off stats, but say them in a way where it sounds as if you already know them
5. Keep a constant tone in your voice
6. Avoid asking your partner questions, such as "What do you think the Knights need to do to win this game?" while their losing 2-1 with 15 minutes left in soccer
7. Don't use words like "Here" or "There", can be left out of your call
8. Try to not guess what the call is on the field, wait for the ref's official call
9. Stay away from apologies

Announcing the Game - Play-by-Play

1. Don't say the players numbers when making a call. Ex: "And number twenty Collins makes the play!"
2. Expand your vocabulary. Ex: Made shot in basketball: Puts it in, bang, knocks it in, lays it in, banks it in, etc.
3. Consistently mention time and score, even if it's shown on screen
4. When the action picks up (like when basketball has it on offensive end, or soccer team has it in the opposing team's half and is attacking), play-by-play takes over
5. Remind the audience who they're listening to

Announcing the Game - Play-by-Play

6. Match the flow of game with your style. Basketball=Fast. Baseball=Slow
7. Lead into color commentator to get them more involved. Ex: "Adam, this Knights team just can't seem to get any long possessions going."
8. If you don't know player's name after key moment, fill the space with team name until you find out who it was

Announcing the Game - Color

1. After a score, or during a slow moment, color announcer takes over
2. Color includes: Key stats, interesting information you brought in, analyzing the previous play, how the game has played out
3. Don't say "but" - what follows usually isn't worth saying
4. Once PbP gets done with call of a score or key moment, break down what you saw in the previous incident
5. Have fun in your analysis, what audiences enjoy most in color commentators nowadays
6. Try not to correct your partner every time they get something wrong

How to Improve

1. Do as many broadcasts as you can
2. Doing sports that you're not comfortable with are the ones that help you grow the most
3. Listen to professionals, and how they handle every situation
4. Practice on your own. Ex: Mute the game, and call it yourself
5. Tune into your fellow students' broadcasts, and those you've done in the past, and learn from them
6. Ask questions, reach out to people
7. You never know everything, you can always keep improving no matter what level you're at