



MEMORANDUM

January 4, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

TO: NCAA Ice Hockey Commissioners, Coaches, Coordinators of Officials and Game Officials.

FROM: Tom Anastos, chair
Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Rules Committee

Steve Piotrowski, secretary-rules editor
Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: Rules and Officiating Updates.

The rules committee has received requests for clarification regarding several situations and how officials should properly enforce these rules. Additionally, the committee is providing some reminders on current rules which require a consistent standard of enforcement. It has been requested that the rules committee provide some guidance in these areas. Clarification points are included with this communication.

1. Dump and Chase Situations:

The committee's consensus is that defenders should be allowed to engage/bump/contact an attacking player "immediately" after the puck is released on a dump in, but players are expected to release the attacker and pursue the puck or retreat following this initial contact. The same standard would be applied regardless of whether or not the attacking player was knocked down. However, it ultimately was decided that the "immediacy" of the contact continues to be a determination made by the officials on a case-by-case basis.

Therefore, as a reminder, immediate contact may be made against the attacking player who dumps the puck past a defender. The defender is obligated to **release immediately** so as not to be guilty of interference. The standard is no longer *two seconds or two strides after releasing the puck*. It should be noted that allowing offensive players more freedom here must not be taken as license to create collisions at higher speed. The following are a few situations to assist with a further understanding of this rule:

Question 1: A Team A forward approaches the attacking blue line and chips the puck behind a Team B defender. The Team B defender immediately contacts the Team A forward. Is this a penalty on Team B?

Interpretation 1: No. The Team B defensive player is rewarded here for maintaining a tight gap between the attacking player. This contact is therefore legal since the contact was immediate.

Question 2: In the same scenario as Question 1, the Team B defender makes immediate contact, but then continues to bump and impede the Team A player who is attempting to

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advance toward the puck. Is this a penalty on Team B?

Interpretation 2: Yes. The Team B defender has earned the right to make immediate contact by keeping a tight gap, but after that contact, the Team A player must be allowed to pursue the puck. The key element here is that the Team B player is allowed to make immediate contact, but then must release the attacking player.

2. Hand Pass or High Stick Directly Off Goalkeeper:

A question was raised recently dealing with where the faceoff location would take place when pucks that are either deliberately batted with the hand or from a high stick of an attacking player directly into the goalkeeper and the goalkeeper immediately covers the puck for a whistle. To clarify, since a rules violation (hand pass or high stick) by the attacking team caused the puck to go directly to the goalkeeper the faceoff will take at the nearest zone line faceoff spot.

The following are a few other situations to assist with a further understanding of this rule:

Question 1: Team A strikes the puck above 4 feet and **DEFLECTS** directly off the Team B goalkeeper. Should there be an immediate whistle?

Interpretation 1: No. In this situation, if the attacking team high stick's the puck off the defending team's goalkeeper and then to a defending player, the play shall continue. If a teammate gains possession and control of the puck, either directly or when deflected off of any player, goalkeeper, or official there shall be a whistle and a faceoff at the nearest faceoff spot one zone closer to the offending team's defensive zone from the point of the violation.

Question 2: Team A bats the puck with an open hand and **DEFLECTS** directly off the Team B goalkeeper. Should there be an immediate whistle?

Interpretation 2: No. In this situation, if the attacking team hand passes the puck off the defending team's goalkeeper and then to a defending player, the play shall continue. A player shall be permitted to stop or bat a puck in the air with the open hand, or push it along the ice with the hand, and a teammate may take control of the puck, unless each of the items below have occurred:

1. The puck was deliberately directed to a teammate;
2. This action allowed the offending team to gain an advantage; and,
3. A teammate gains possession and control of the puck, either directly or when deflected off of any player or official.

If a teammate gains possession and control of the puck, either directly or when deflected off of any player, goalkeeper, or official there shall be a whistle and a faceoff at the nearest faceoff spot one zone closer to the offending team's defensive zone from the point of the violation.

Question 3: A1 deflects the puck above four feet when contact is made with A1's stick. The puck then deflects off B1 entering Team B's goal. Should the goal be allowed?

Interpretation 3: No, the goal should be disallowed. A1 was still in possession of the puck when it entered the goal, deflection off of the defending player does not change possession of the puck.

The determining factor as to high stick of the puck is the height at which the puck and stick make contact, not the height of the stick when contact is made.

Question 4: In their defending zone, Team B Player B-1 strikes the puck above 4 feet directly off his/her goalkeeper and into the net. Should the goal be allowed?

Interpretation 4: Yes, the goal shall be allowed. In this situation, if the puck is struck above 4 feet by the defending team and **DEFLECTS** directly off a defending team's player (may include the goalkeeper), and into the net this is a legal play and the goal should be allowed

3. Helmets brackets ("J-Clips"):

The rules committee has received several requests for clarification regarding the brackets that hold the facemask in place on the helmet (commonly known as "J-Clips") and how this impacts the HECC Certification of this equipment. It has been requested that the rules committee provide some guidance in this area.

After researching this issue with HECC representatives, the committee wishes to remind the ice hockey community that all players must wear a HECC-approved hockey helmet and facemask. HECC requires all mounting hardware of the facemask to be in place, which includes the "J-Clip". This assembly must not be altered in anyway when mounting the facemask to the helmet, as these clips are designed to help keep the face mask properly in place. The removal of the "J-Clip" further increases the risk of potential injury to a player and, according to HECC representatives, may void the HECC Certification, which would make the facemask illegal under current NCAA Ice Hockey Rules.

As a reminder, it is the responsibility of each member institution coach, athletic trainer, and equipment manager to be knowledgeable and informed of the NCAA Ice Hockey Rules that govern all protective equipment. Student-athlete safety is of the utmost importance. Institutions must be diligent in properly equipping the student-athletes to be fully compliant with all NCAA rules and regulations. Equipment shall not be modified from its original manufactured state and shall be worn in the manner the manufacturer intended it to be worn. As a further reminder, it is the responsibility of each member institution coach, athletic trainer, and equipment manager to be knowledgeable and informed of the NCAA Ice Hockey Rules that govern all protective equipment. Institutions must be diligent in monitoring equipment used and be in compliance with all NCAA rules and regulations. Appropriate rules are listed in the NCAA ice hockey rules book (available for download free of charge at www.ncaapublications.com).

4. Penalty Observed – Officials Can't Identify Player:

The rules committee received a request to provide clarification for the following situation: Player A1 scores a goal and as part of the celebration, A1 skates down the Team A bench high fiving teammates. After the end of the bench, a Team B player spears A1 and several teammates quickly grab the player and push/shove. The linesman sees the spearing action, but is unable to see the

number of the player. Several Team B players on the ice are also pushing/shoving. When the teams are separated, the linesman reports to the referees what he witnessed. The referees use video replay to see if they can determine which player speared A1, but the angles available do not show clearly which player it was.

Question: What should the on-ice crew do?

Answer: Officials are encouraged to work together and utilize proper positioning mechanics and communication to help identify a player as in the aforementioned situation. However, should officials be unable to identify the player, officials are advised to explain the situation to the coach and request the coach's help with identifying the player who committed the infraction. Should the coach not cooperate or, is unable to assist in identifying the player, officials may select a player who was on the ice when the infraction took place to serve the penalty. Where video review is available, officials may use this to assist in correctly identifying the player who committed the infraction.

5. End of Period – Players Leaving Bench:

The rules committee would like to remind all coaches and players of the following rule and requests cooperation and compliance. *Rule 90.4 states:* "At the end of each period, the home team players must proceed directly to their dressing room while the visiting team players must wait for a signal from the official to proceed only if they have to go on the ice to reach their dressing room. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a bench minor penalty for delay of game."

"When the visiting team must proceed by the way of the ice to its dressing room at the end of a period, the team must wait for a signal from one of the officials before proceeding. Failure to wait for the official's signal shall result in the assessment of a bench minor penalty for delay of game. Players shall not be permitted to come on the ice at the end of the any period for the purpose of warming-up, greeting the goalkeeper, etc. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a bench minor penalty for delay of game".

The committee requests that this information be reviewed with all administrators, coaches, players and equipment personnel. Thank you for your time and attention and good luck this season.

We hope this information is helpful. Good luck as the season progresses.

TA/SP:gk

cc: Selected NCAA Staff