



NORTHERN ONTARIO HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

110 LAKESHORE DRIVE
NORTH BAY, ONTARIO P1A 2A8
PHONE: (705) 474-8851 • FAX: (705) 474-6019
www.noha.on.ca



Standard of Play - 2010-2011

Introduction

Players, Coaches and Officials have adapted to the standard of play set by Hockey Canada. This has created a very exciting brand of hockey at all levels. The speed of the game has increased and the stick work has declined. Officials must continue to enforce the rules and the coaches must continue to teach the players to play within the guidelines.

Referees-in-Chief, Officiating Program Instructors and Supervisors are to make positive comments on how officials are calling the game and promote this style. Hockey Canada is not looking for perfection - they are looking for excellence.

Coaches must be educated to teach their players properly and must realize that officials are officiating the game according to guidelines set by Hockey Canada. They will have a greater responsibility away from the game. Coaches must be calm and show patience. In order to be successful, they must promote the new standard and instruct the players that this is best for the game.

We must all work together by teaching, instructing and providing all information possible so that our officials, coaches and players understand the new guidelines and interpretations. We are all working together to make every game fair and safe for all participants.

Glen Campbell

NOHA Director of Officials



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Restraining Foul and Interference Penalty Standards

Restraining fouls include hooking, tripping, holding and interference

The restraining standards are not an exercise to fill the penalty box but to assess an appropriate penalty to a player who shall clearly “impede” the progress of an opponent.

Penalties are assessed from the opening face-off for the entire game including overtime - from the first game of the season (pre-season) up to and including the play-offs.

The key to an official’s success is not to anticipate the consequence but to react to the infraction and evaluate the consequence. Officials must be in position to obtain a clear view. This means skating hard through the neutral zone and continuing the same momentum into the end zone. Anticipate when to move to the net or when the play is leaving an end zone.

Players are allowed to battle for body position using their strength and balance. Usually this occurs along the boards and in front of the net. Officials must not penalize players for using assets of strength and balance. **Any attempt to “tie up” an opponent by continuously pushing a non-resisting opponent around or by blocking his progress is to be considered interference.**

The stick can only be used to play the puck.

Guidelines for hooking using very strict enforcement

The decision to assess a penalty would be based on:

- Any loss of momentum
- Causing diminished space between the players
- Impeding the opponent’s progress
- Locking on-is the player continuing to skate
- Loss of balance
- Reducing the opponent’s ability to pass or shoot the puck or to receive a pass.

A player can still legally lift an opponent’s stick to prevent him from receiving a pass. A “lift check” is a type of stick check where one temporarily lifts or knocks an opponent’s stick upwards with one’s own stick. Ideally, this action is followed immediately by an attempt to gain control of the puck. Violent lift checks that result in a prolonged lift (a restraining action), or that involve a clear hooking action or “locking” of the sticks will result in a penalty. Lift checks may be employed against the puck carrier or during a battle for a loose puck.

NOTE: Officials must be aware of where the stick is at all times. The stick placed on the opponent’s body and parallel to the ice surface is considered in the danger zone. Once the stick is in this position, any tug or pull of consequence shall be penalized.

Do not focus on the player with the puck if there is space between him and opposing players.



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Guidelines for Tripping

- Tripping of a player will be penalized with strict enforcement.
- Placing the stick between an opponent's legs shall be considered in the danger zone.
- The use of the stick between a player's legs (can-opener/corkscrew - a player putting the stick between the legs of an opponent and twisting) for impeding progress, loss of balance or tripping is to be penalized. Hockey is a game of speed and balance in which players frequently go down following incidental contact. Officials must see the foul.

Guidelines for Holding/Interference using very strict enforcement

- The use of the free arm/hand to clutch, grab, hold, hold the stick, pin or impede a player is to be strictly penalized.
- Pushing an opponent with the free hand, not roughing is allowed.
- Interference of a player will be penalized with strict enforcement. The use of a "pick" or a "block" is no longer permitted.
- Players can battle within the rules but must be cognizant of the puck or they can be called for interference.

NOTES:

Finishing the check: an offensive player who is in the process of dumping, shooting, or passing the puck may be hit legally providing the motion of the check was initiated and then completed immediately following the release of the puck. The guideline for this interpretation is, stick length + arm length from the opposing player once it leaves his stick.

If the puck is shot into the end zone and an attacking player is skating in, the defenseman cannot skate out of his line of direction to move in front of the opposing player. He has two choices, stay where he is and force the player to skate around him, or once the puck is shot in, turn and skate with the player.

Face-offs: players are not permitted to use their stick or free-hand to impede or block the progress of opponents who are in pursuit of the puck or trying to obtain a defensive position.

Guidelines for stick fouls

The use of the stick will be limited to only playing the puck. Sticks are not to be used to cross-check or slash opponents. These fouls will be penalized with strict enforcement.

Slashing/Cross-Checking examples include:

- The use of a stick to slash an opponent's body or hands.
- Aggressive stick on stick infractions are to be called.
- Cross-checking an opponent will be penalized with strict enforcement including fouls in front of the net. You can place the stick on your opponent in the mid/lower back and push with the shaft of the stick, but cannot extend your arms and use a cross-check punch or deliver a blow to the back.



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SUMMARY:

Officials can no longer keep their old habits or follow the previous game management guidelines.

You cannot officiate games with the intentions of let them play- only call hooks or trips if it denies a scoring opportunity- let the players decide the game or it is a close game- put the whistle away. Remember, you are setting the standard for the next crew of officials and informing the players on how they expect the game to be called.

Officials are not to make phantom calls. If you do not see the entire play or infraction, do not make the call. Call the action, not the reaction.

If a player is exhibiting tactics bordering on a penalty in front of the net, it is very important to communicate with the player. However, this communication is not a warning. If an infraction has been committed, assess the penalty.

Officials must be aware at all times and expect that players will try to gain an advantage by diving. The Hockey Canada guideline for calling a player for a dive is unsportsmanlike conduct.

However, officials are encouraged to only call the blatant infractions. If it occurs, officials should approach the coach and communicate with him that if players continue to dive, an unsportsmanlike conduct will be assessed.

The two choices are – if you were assessing a penalty on the play and the opposing player, in your opinion, dives assess both penalties or if you were not calling a penalty and a player dives, only assess the unsportsmanlike penalty.

What is diving? It is a player creating an act to get a call. How can officials recognize this infraction? Some players embellish their actions and make it obvious. Watch the actions of the player checking him, there could be a delay in the player's reactions, and the unnatural movement of the player.

Pin against the boards: the defensive player may make the initial contact with the puck carrier against the boards. Once this initial contact has been made, the defensive player must play the puck. Once the puck leaves the area, (on the boards), the onus is on the defensive player to release the opponent immediately. Officials should communicate with the defensive player and inform them when the puck is no longer in the area.

Goaltenders must be protected at all times. Defensemen cannot use force to protect the front of the goal which will allow players to go to the net. Any unnecessary contact with the goaltender must be called.

Officials are not to get caught up in the game and must assess penalties as warranted and appropriate regardless of the flow or how many men it will put a team down. The flow of the game has improved as the players are adapting to the standard.