



NOTICE TO REFEREES



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With the season about to get underway there are a few things that need clarification/reiteration.

Rule Changes

The recent edition of rule book incorporates all the changes that had been previously notified in a Notice To Referees 14 May 2005 however there have been further changes, some that appeared in the IIHF's 2005 updated edition of their rule book that had not appeared within their earlier 2005 rules update announcement along with some changes that the NZIHA introduced very recently.

The changes are:

- Rule 109 (b) Players Benches Teams are allowed up to 6 team Officials on their bench.
- Rule 302 (b) Skates Quad skates are now prohibited.
Skates must have all their wheels in place.
- Rule 305 Dangerous Equipment Hollow shaft sticks must have their ends covered.
- Rule 406 (h) Penalty Shot The waived Minor penalty is now recorded but not served.
- Rule 409 Calling of Penalties The waived Minor penalty is now recorded but not served.
(d & f)
- Rule 606 (e) Charging and Checking From Behind Charging & Checking From Behind can now be treated as a Match Penalty if circumstances warrant it.
- Rule 607 (d) Cross-Checking and Butt-Ending Cross-Checking can now be treated as a Match Penalty if circumstances warrant it.
- Rule 613 (a) Fighting A Game Misconduct or a Match penalty can now be assessed for fighting. The referee has wide discretion when determining degree of involvement ie/. instigator/retaliator etc.
- Rule 615 Gross Misconduct *(deleted)* Gross Misconduct has been deleted as a penalty description – all previous circumstances described under Gross Misconduct have been incorporated under Match Penalty.
- Rule 617 (b) High Sticks The referee has wide discretion regarding assessment of penalties when the “injured” player is not wearing facial protection.
- Rule 623 Kicking Player Kicking is now to treated as being a similar infringement as Slashing with penalties been assessed accordingly.
- Rule 630 Puck Out of Sight and Illegal Puck Referees do not automatically stop the game if the puck hits the goalkeepers helmet. Referees have discretion depending upon the severity of the shot.
- Rule 635 (b) Start of Games and Periods The wearing of all equipment is no longer mandatory for the handshake following a game.
- Signal *(New)* Body Checking: Non whistle arm diagonally across the chest and placed on opposite shoulder.



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Younger Players Playing up a Grade

This appears to be a trend in some regions. Referees must ensure that the younger players are not given preferential treatment regarding physical contact.

ie/. An U14/U16 player who chooses to play up in the U20's but yet who is physically smaller and does not have the upper body strength nor have the skating strength of an older, larger player will no doubt come off second best when you have the 2 players contesting the puck.

Consequently it would be unfair to penalize a "big" player just because a "small" player gets knocked over when two players are actively pursuing the puck – provided that there is no illegal activity on the part of the "bigger" player.

Referees must resist calling penalties in this instance for "incidental" contact – refer to Rule 640 Roughing and in particular to (b) 2nd paragraph which reads:

It is not the intent to penalize incidental contact between two opposing players who are actively in pursuit of the puck. The act of riding an opponent off the puck shall not be considered to be roughing.

However, this does not allow the player who is not in possession of the puck to throw the body into an opponent to achieve possession.

Interference on Goalkeeper

We still need to keep a close eye on this aspect. Any attacking player who:

- Skates the crease and makes contact with the opposing team's goalkeeper, no matter how minor, is to be penalized.
- Drives hard to the net, cuts across the front of the crease either to screen a shot or take shot and makes contact with the goalkeeper either by leading with or dragging a skate, is to be penalized.
- That makes contact with the goalkeeper with their stick either after attempting a shot or trying to slap an airborne puck down, is to be penalized.
- Follows through after either taking a shot or dropping a pass for a team mate and makes contact with the goalkeeper with either, body, skates or stick is to be penalized.



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Players Helmets

Players whose helmets have been dislodged from their heads or having had the helmet displaced places it back on the head without fastening the helmet strap are not allowed to take part in play in any manner.

ie/. they can not make an attempt to play the puck, they can not fore-check an opponent regardless of whether or not the opponent has possession of the puck.

Because it is a safety issue all infringements must be penalized. Any referee who allows a player to continue playing in an unsafe condition is not taking all reasonable precautions.

Referees can “*nip this problem in the bud*” by enforcing the 2 finger gap between underside of chin and the helmet strap.

Freezing The Puck

More and more this ploy is being used by both players and goalkeepers. Players use their skates against the boards and goalkeepers use their stick to trap the puck against the goal frame.

Players use this manoeuvre when they have been isolated from their teammates. They just position their skates against the puck trapping it against the boards giving their teammates time to come to their assistance. They make no attempt to play the puck either by kicking it clear or by using their stick. Rule 612 (a) & 628 are both explicit. If it is clear that one player clearly, deliberately, stopped and held the puck prior to an opponent arriving and makes no attempt to clear the puck or allow his opponent an opportunity to play the puck immediately then a Minor Penalty must be assessed for Delay of Game.

Goalkeepers use this manoeuvre when the puck goes around the side of the goal or even around the back. They place their stick over the puck trapping it against the goal frame. Quite often goalkeepers will raise one arm hoping for the referee to blow their whistle for a face-off thinking that they have the puck covered/caught as per Rule 616 (a). Rule 612 (b) & Rule 628 are both explicit.

By allowing these tactics to continue we are inviting the possibility of injuries occurring when players, either trying to kick the puck free or by attempting to make contact with the puck using their sticks – both actions being totally legal within the rules, become frustrated and perhaps overstep the mark in their pursuit of the puck.

Generally any injury occurring occurs to the perpetrator of the incident whereby the player who initially used “legal actions” in an attempt to clear the puck but unfortunately goes a little too far ends up receiving a penalty.

This aspect of the game needs to be cleaned up.



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The interpretation to be used is:

A player who traps the puck and then “shuffles” along the boards is creating a Delay of Game situation. Allow them 3 seconds and then call on them to release the puck and if they don't then blow the game down and conduct a face-off at the nearest face-off spot that does not disadvantage the non-offending team. Issue a “team” warning and if the same team offends again in the same game assess the offending player a minor penalty for Delay of Game.

A Full Interpretation of Injury Including Appearance of Blood

As the result of an infringement players fall into 1 of 3 categories:

1. Fit players A player who whilst having been impeded illegally in some way has no ongoing disability, due to the infringement, that prevents them from playing to their potential.
2. Hurt players A player who receives a “knock” during the infringement (penalty offence) but who has no intention of leaving the game and either after a short recovery period or having received “first aid” returns to the game.
3. Injured players A player who as a result of the infringement (penalty offence) can/will not take further part in the game.

When assessing an incident consider 2 options:

1. Is the player **Hurt**, or
Injured ie/. leaves the rink surface to either recover or receive treatment (first aid) but will return to the game.
2. Is the player **Injured** ie/. leaves the rink surface, to receive treatment (first aid) or hospital and will not take further part in the game.

Hurt If a player is “Hurt” during an infringement the referee has 2 choices, assess either a:

1. Major Penalty This penalty should be assessed because the offending player, while perhaps showing no intention, did cause his opponent to have to leave the rink for some form of treatment/recovery period, albeit temporarily.
2. Match Penalty For an Attempt to Injure.
A Match Penalty should only be assessed if the referee determines that the offending player attempted to injure his opponent.

To assess an “Attempt To Injure” the referee needs to have determined that the degree of ferociousness exhibited by the offender



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when carrying out the infringement showed a blatant disregard for the safety of his opponent.

Injured If a player is “Injured” during an infringement the referee has 2 choices, assess either a:

1. Major + Game Misconduct Penalty,
or a
 2. Match Penalty
- This penalty should be assessed if the referee determines that the offending player showed no intention of inflicting an “Injury” but that an “Injury”, unfortunately, still occurred.
- For an Attempt to Injure.
A Match Penalty should be assessed if the referee determines that the offending player attempted to injure his opponent.

To assess an “Attempt To Injure” the referee needs to have determined that the degree of ferociousness exhibited by the offender when carrying out the infringement showed a blatant disregard for the safety of his opponent.

Blood

Too many people think that just because “blood” is present that this automatically leads to a Major + Game Misconduct for “Injury”. **This is an unreasonable perspective to uphold.**

The appearance of blood caused by an infringement does not necessarily mean an automatic Major + Game Misconduct. A referee has wide discretion when determining culpability.

Nowhere in the NZIHA rule book does it state that the appearance of blood defines:

- (i) an injury, or
- (ii) the automatic assessment of a Major + Game Misconduct penalty.

When blood is drawn on a player (more often than not on one who is not wearing a face cage) around the cheek/mouth area when a stick has come up and caught the player in a glancing blow. Quite often the player themselves have played a considerable role in causing this to have happened.

ie/. like when a player holds their stick down hard over an opponents stick and then releases their “hold-down” pressure.

Is it fair and reasonable for a player to be removed from the game in this instance - **No it is neither fair nor reasonable.**



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If you have determined that the player is either partially to blame or is wholly responsible for their own misfortune then let them know immediately at the time and do not assess a penalty at all.

However, if a player causes another player to bleed by careless use of their stick then stop the clock, inspect the bleeding player and assess the “damage” done. If it is just a graze/abrasion assess a Major. If it looks a little bit more than an abrasion talk to the player concerned to find out just what his intentions are;

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Are they going to continue in the game after “first aid” ?, or | If they say they want to continue playing advise them that the offending player will be assessed a Major penalty. |
| 2. Will they be leaving the game. | If they say they will not continue playing in the game advise them that the offending player will be assessed a Major + Game Misconduct. |

If the “Injured player” subsequently returns to the game, having advised that he would take no further part in the game, you could do one of several things:

1. Prior to signing the game sheet at the end of the game downgrade the previously assessed Major + Game Misconduct penalty to a Major penalty.
2. Assess the so called “injured” player a Minor penalty for Unsportsmanlike Conduct.
3. If the so called “injured” player argues with you having been assessed a Minor penalty for Unsportsmanlike Conduct assess them a Misconduct penalty.
4. If the so called “injured” player continues to argue with you having been assessed a Minor penalty for Unsportsmanlike Conduct and a Misconduct penalty then assess them a Game Misconduct penalty and remove them from the game also.

If the injury to the opponent is the result of “high sticking” and where the injured player is not wearing facial protection, at referees discretion, a minor, double minor, major or major plus game misconduct may or may not be assessed to the offending player.

However, if an offending player’s action was done with intent to injure assess a Match Penalty for Attempt To Injure.

Concise interpretation for Blood injury:

Infringement causes blood; - accidentally, unintentional just carelessness = Major penalty.

Infringement causes blood; - while action was deliberate it was not malicious = Major + Game Misconduct penalty.

Infringement causes blood; - referee determines that infringement was malicious therefore committed with intent to cause injury = Match penalty.



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How do you determine
Intent ?

- by the circumstances surrounding the event.
- was the infringement on the puck or in back-play.
- if the infringement was on the puck was the offending player attempting to play the puck or did they ignore the puck and go straight at the player ?
- if the infringement occurred off the puck, did the offending player chase the opponent in order to commit the infringement
- the degree of ferociousness in the committing of the infringement.
- body language.
- players demeanor leading up to the infringement - had the offending player used threatening language towards their opponents prior to the infringement ?

In the case of a stick offence; remember as a referee you have discretion regarding whether or not the lack of facial protection may have contributed to the appearance of blood. ie/. a minor, double minor, major or major plus game misconduct may or may not be assessed to the offending player.