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**2009-10 Edition**

**Bill Spohn**  
 USA Hockey Playing Rules Committee  
 1775 Bob Johnson Dr.  
 Colorado Springs, CO 80906-4090

Page 1 (updated 10/20/2009 with 2009-11 USA Hockey, 2009-10 NFHS and 2008-10 NCAA changes)

Rule (Situation)	Dif	USA Hockey (HS & Below)	N F H S	N C A A
<b>SECTION 1 - RINK</b>				
Goalkeeper warm-up area defined	U	Expanded Privileged Area	No rule	No rule
Maximum non-players on bench	X	Four (4)	Five (5)	Six (6) [B. Minor after warning]
Goal Crease shape	N	6 ft. semi-circle	6 ft. semi-circle	Truncated semi-circle (NHL)
No Tobacco/Alcohol on ice or bench	X	Bench minor	Prohibit Tobacco (Game Misc)	Ejection from game
<b>SECTION 2 - COMPOSITION OF TEAMS</b>				
Maximum players in uniform	X	Maximum 20 total, maximum 18 players	Maximum 20, including goalkeepers	Maximum 18 players; 2 or 3 goalkeepers (non exhib. games)
Captains and Alternates	N	Captain + 2 Alternates (max.)	Max. 3 (any combination)	Captain and Designated Alt.
Visiting team must wear dark uniforms	X	No rule	Required	"Lights" permitted
Logo limitations on uniform	U	None	Yes (logos, flags, meml.patch)	Yes (logo restrictions only)
Captain coming off bench to complain	X	All- Minor	(1) - Minor; (2) - Misconduct; (3) - Game Misconduct; (4) - Game Disqualification	All - Misconduct
Captains and Referees meet before game	U	No rule	Required	Required
More than 19 Players + 3 Goalkeepers on the ice in the pre-game	N	No rule - implied only rostered players may be on the ice	No rule - implied only rostered players may be on the ice	Bench minor penalty
Roster correction after game begins	N	OK if inadvertent; bench minor penalty assessed	OK if inadvertent; minor penalty	Not permitted; bench minor penalty assessed
Jersey number in addition to back	X	No rule	Both sleeves	Front or both sleeves
Spare goalkeeper required on bench	N	No rule; recommended in playdowns	No rule	Yes, at start of game, or bench minor
"Temporary" goalkeeper	U	Permitted	No rule	No rule
Goalkeeper substitution during stoppage	N	Return after next stoppage	Return after next stoppage	No rule
Not starting with announced lineup	N	Permitted	Permitted	Bench minor penalty
Pucks on ice before start of second or third periods	N	No rule	No rule	Charged with time-out; bench minor if time-out already used



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Rule (Situation)	Dif	USA Hockey (HS & Below)	N F H S	N C A A
Recovery time for injured goalkeeper	U	None	"Reasonable amount of time"	"Reasonable time"
Team huddles before 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> period	U	No rule	Minor	Bench minor
Unconscious player rule (requires written physician OK to resume play)	F	No rule	Required	No rule
Stoppage for injured player	F	Immediate when his team has possession	Immediate (regardless of possession)	Immediate when his team has possession
<b>SECTION 3 - EQUIPMENT</b>				
Hollow end of stick must be covered	N	Yes	Yes	No rule
Stick blade curvature restriction	N	¾"	¾"	½"
Skates not conforming to rules	F	Not permitted to play	(1) Warn; (2) Game Misc.	Not permitted to play
Throat protector – Goalkeeper	F	Recommended	Required	Recommended
Throat protector - Player	F	Not required	Recommended	Not required
Player's helmet comes off during play	N	Immediate stoppage. Cannot return until play resumes	Immediate stoppage. Cannot return until play resumes	Immediate stoppage.
HECC-approved helmet	N	Required	Required	Players - Required Goalkeepers- Recommended
Wearing helmet on players' and penalty bench	N	Required. Violation - Misc.	Required. Violation - Misc.	Required. Violation-Ben. Minor
Helmet chinstrap length restriction	N	Implied	Implied	Two fingers
Torn, ripped, unzipped pants	U	No rule	Not permitted	Not permitted
Goalkeeper Blocker Glove limits	F	8" x 15"	9" x 17"	8" x 15"
Goalkeeper Catching Glove limits	F	45" Max. circumference	9" x 17"	45" Max. circumference
Goalkeeper Leg Pad limits	F	11" X 38"	12" wide	11" X 38"
Mouthguard not worn – Goalkeeper	F	Misconduct after team warning	Minor after team warning	(1) Misconduct after warning
Mouthguard not worn – Player	F	Misconduct after team warning	(1) Misconduct after team warning (2) Game Misconduct	(1) Misconduct after warning
Mouthguard - non-clear color	N	Required	Required	Recommended
Mouthguard - attached to facemask	N	Not required	Not required	No rule
Warning prior to equipment violation	N	Yes	Yes	No



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Rule (Situation)	Dif	USA Hockey (HS & Below)	N F H S	N C A A
Casts / splints	N	OK if adequately covered and physician approved	OK if adequately covered and physician approved	No rule
Wearing exposed jewelry	U	Not permitted	(1) Misc. (2) Game Misc.	(1) Misc. (2) Game Misc.
Equipment request limitation	X	Anything in Section 3 which has specifications	Sticks, Goalkeeper Equipment	Sticks, Skates, Goalkeeper Equipment
Location of logos on puck	N	No rule	No rule	Limited position
Electronic Equipment - player on the ice	U	Bench minor; equip. removed	No rule	No rule
<b>SECTION 4 - PENALTIES</b>				
Bench minor penalty defined	F	Yes	No rule (Captain's Choice of players on the ice notation on penalties)	Yes
Who serves "Bench Minor" (NFHS equivalent)	N	Player on ice at infraction	Player on ice at infraction	Any non-penalized player
Coincident minor penalty rule	N	Equal number of minors offset	Equal number of minors offset	Equal number of minors offset unless teams at full strength
Minor penalty termination when scored upon	N	First minor being served	First minor being served	Minor causing short-handed at time of goal
Player/GK ejected after second Major	N	Yes (plus 2 game suspension)	Yes	No
Team may delay placing a substitute on Penalty Bench for Major + GM or Match penalty	U	Yes (certain situations)	No	No
Game suspension for Game Misconduct	U	Yes	No	No
5-penalty maximum/game (player/GK); 15-penalty maximum/game (coach)	N U	Yes (Game Misc.) Yes (Next game suspension)	Yes (Game Misc.) No	No No
Progressive suspension	U	No	Yes (Disqualification Penalty)	Yes (Disqualification Penalty)
Match penalty provision	U	Yes	No	No
Match (DQ) penalty to non-player	N	Applies	Applies	No rule
Maximum Disqualifications per player per game	F	No limit	One	No limit
Goalkeeper must remain in Privileged Area throughout Penalty Shot attempt	N	Not required	Not required	Yes
Who takes Penalty Shot if player selected is injured or ejected, or Captain has choice	U	Teammate on the ice at the time of infraction	Any teammate not then serving a penalty	Any teammate not then serving a penalty



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Rule (Situation)	Dif	USA Hockey (HS & Below)	N F H S	N C A A
Goalkeeper must serve his own major and/or misconduct penalties	U	No	Yes	Yes
Requires the recording of any delayed penalty nullified by a goal being scored	U	Yes	No	No
<b>SECTION 5 - OFFICIALS</b>				
Approved Officiating systems	X	RR or RLL (not RRL)	RR, RRL, RLL or R-2AR	RRL or 2R-2L
2-man system if 3-man and 1 incapacitated	F	2 Referees or Ref.-Line.	2 Referees	2 Ref/1 Lines or 1 Ref/ 2 Lines
Linesman report observed MINOR pen. to Ref.	X	"Injury Potential" minors only	No	Yes
1-Referee: Face-offs	N	Start of periods, after goals	Start of periods, after goals	Start of periods, after goals (Not 2R-1L)
<b>SECTION 6 - PLAYING RULES</b>				
Awarded goal for certain Penalty Shot situations if goalkeeper is not on the ice: - Fall on or pick up puck in crease - Thrown stick (Defending Zone) - Fouled from behind (breakaway)	X	Awarded goal (all 4 situations)	Awarded goal allowed in certain situations where a goal is imminent	Awarded goal allowed in certain situations where a goal is imminent
Verbally abusing Official after game – player	U	Misconduct or Game Miscond.	Disqualification	Disqualification
Foul language on players' bench – player	X	Misconduct or Bench Minor	Minor + Misconduct	Misconduct
Continuing altercation	U	Misconduct or Game Miscond.	Disqualification	Disqualification
Touching/Holding Game Official – player	U	Misconduct or Game Miscond.	Disqualification	Disqualification
Banging boards with stick – player	U	Misconduct or Game Miscond.	Minor	Minor
Obscene Gesture – player	X	Game Misconduct	Minor + Game Miscond. or DQ	Misconduct or Game Miscond.
Racial or ethnic slur	F	Game Misconduct	Minor + Game Miscond. or DQ	Game Misconduct
"Detrimental Conduct" – player or Team Official	U	Match	No rule	No rule
Verbal abuse to Game Official after game by Team Official	X	(1) Bench Minor, (2) Game Misc.; Match if threat	Disqualification	Supplementary Discipline
Obscene Gesture by Team Official	N	Game Misconduct	Game Misconduct	Bench Minor



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Rule (Situation)	Dif	USA Hockey (HS & Below)	N F H S	N C A A
Thrown object onto the ice	N	Bench Minor	Minor	Player: Minor + Game Misc. Coach: Bench Minor + G.Misc.
Non-physical interference with On-Ice Officials	N	Misconduct	Misconduct	Player: Misc. or Game Misc.
Touching/Holding Game Official by Team Official	U	Game Misconduct	Disqualification	Disqualification
Physically harming Game Official by Team Off.	X	Match	Disqualification	Supplementary Discipline
Goalkeeper playing with a broken stick	N	Not permitted - Minor	Not permitted - Minor	OK until next stoppage
Butt-Ending and Sparring	X	Major + Game Misconduct	Disqualification	Major + Game Misc. or DQ
Checking from behind	X	Minor + Misconduct, Major + Game Misconduct, or Match; 5+GM req'd if head-first into boards or goal	Minor + Misconduct or DQ; DQ required if head-first into boards or goal.	Minor or Major; Major and Game Misconduct/DQ req'd if into boards or goal
Players must be stationary for face-off	N	No	No	Yes
Player/Line change at stoppage	X	Implied 8 seconds (max.) each for visitor and home team	5 seconds each for visitor and home team	5 seconds for visiting team and 8 seconds for home team
Player change after accidental goal dislodged by defending team	N	Permitted	Permitted	Not Permitted
Player change after team ices the puck	N	Permitted	Permitted	Not Permitted
Face-off location	U	Anywhere permitted by rule	Only at 9 face-off spots	Only at 9 face-off spots
Face-off location after non-coincident penalty	U	Last play or Neutral Zone spot	Offending team's defending zone	Offending team's defending zone
Face-off location for carrying /throwing or illegal hand passing puck	U	Neutral zone or last play	Defending zone	Defending zone
Face-off for interference from bench	X	Last play (cannot gain ice advantage)	Last play	Offending team end zone spot
Goalkeeper freezes puck on ice when out of crease, puck in front of goal line (in Priv. Area)	N	No penalty	No penalty	Minor (interpretation)
Goalkeeper shoots puck out of rink over glass	U	Minor - Always	Minor – If deliberate	Minor – If deliberate
Goalkeeper checks opponent in Priv. Area	N	No rule	No rule	Minor or Major
Instigating Fisticuffs	F	Minor	No special rule	Minor



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Rule (Situation)	Dif	USA Hockey (HS & Below)	N F H S	N C A A
Fisticuffs, including player struck during altercation who continues by retaliating	U	Minor, Double Minor, or Major + Game Misconduct	Disqualification	Disqualification
Subsequent player enters altercation (fight)	X	First in - Game Misconduct; Others - no automatic penalty	Disqualification	No automatic penalty
Intentionally dropping stick or gloves(altercation)	X	Minor	Minor	Minor
Removing helmet prior to or during altercation	U	Game Misconduct	No rule	No rule
Closing hand on puck (not in crease)	N	Stoppage only	Stoppage only	Minor (if thrown)
Check to the head area (Head Contact)	U	Minor, Major or Major + Game Misconduct	Minor, major or DQ.	Minor, major or DQ
High Stick definition	U	Above normal shoulder height of checking player	Above 4 feet	Above 4 feet
Goalkeeper play puck with high stick	N	No	No	Permitted
Grabbing Facemask	X	Major + Game Misconduct	Major or Disqualification	Minor or Major
Directing puck into goal with skate	X	Disallowed	Disallowed	Disallowed
Attacking player in crease when goal scored (goalkeeper is in the crease)	N	No goal	No goal	No goal unless not interfering with the goalkeeper
Kick shot (skate kicks stick blade)	U	No rule	Misconduct	Misconduct
Player leaves players' bench or penalty bench during altercation	U	Major + Game Misconduct	Disqualification	Disqualification
Leaving penalty bench during time-out	F	Not permitted	Permitted	Not permitted
Extra player prevents breakaway	X	Penalty Shot	Penalty Shot + Misconduct	Bench Minor, Misconduct, and Penalty Shot
Delayed offsides permitted	U	No – (Except HS teams)	Yes	Yes
Tag-up to nullify delayed off-side	U	No – (Except HS teams)	Yes	Yes
Nullify icing if pass is judged receivable	N	No	No	Yes
Icing error	N	End zone spot where occurred	End zone spot where occurred	Center spot unless unduly penalizing either team
Off-side error	N	Neutral zone spot	Neutral zone spot	Center spot
Carrying puck behind net more than once per period (not being checked)	N	No rule	No rule	Minor



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Rule (Situation)	Dif	USA Hockey (HS & Below)	N F H S	N C A A
Additional puck on ice	N	Stop only if interferes with play	Stop only if interferes with play	Stop at change of possession
Team refuses to start play when ordered to do so by Referee	X	(1) 15 seconds, (2) Bench minor, (3) 15 seconds, (4) Suspend game	(1) Warn, (2) 3-min. to comply, (3) Major if comply or forfeit if no comply	(1) Warn, (2) Minor, (3) Major, (4) Forfeit
Slew-footing	X	Major or Major + Game Misc.	Minor or Major	Major + Game Misc. or DQ.
Thrown stick	U	At puck in Def. Zone: Pen. Shot, Otherwise: minor	Preventing a goal: Pen. Shot Otherwise: minor	Preventing a goal: Pen. Shot Otherwise: minor
"Mercy Rule" (ending game early)	F	No	Permitted	No
Time of period	X	20 minutes maximum	15 (up to 17 min. by State)	20 minutes
Time-out permitted	U	Before conclusion of line change procedure	Anytime during a stoppage	Anytime during a stoppage
Max. period length, sudden-death overtime	X	10 min. (no resurface)	8 min. (no resurface)	5 min. (no resurface)
Video review	N	No rule	No rule	Yes
Tripping	N	Minor or Major	Minor or major	Minor
Location of "fouled from behind" for Penalty Shot	X	Neutral or Attacking Zone	Attacking Zone	Attacking side of center line
Unnecessary Roughness	X	Minor or Double Minor, except for hit above shoulders	Minor, Major or Disqualification	Minor
Avoidable check to player in possession	N	Minor or Major	Minor or Major	No rule
<b>SIGNALS and PROCEDURES</b>				
Goal scored - blowing the whistle	N	Yes	Yes	No
Icing signal, non-whistle arm, back official	N	Vertical	Vertical	66° above horizontal
Delayed off-side	U	Non-whistle arm vertical (HS teams only)	Non-whistle arm vertical; whistle arm angled toward line	Non-whistle arm vertical; whistle arm angled toward line