Ask the Official - Week 18

January 18-24, 2013

QUESTION #1: Team A pulls their goalkeeper and Team B's player is on a break-a-way towards scoring on the empty net. He is pulled down from behind fifteen feet from the goal (inside the blue line). What is the appropriate penalty (action) by the referee?

ANSWER #1: Rule 616(c) in the USA Hockey Playing Rules states,

“If the opposing goalkeeper has been removed from the ice and an obvious and imminent goal has been prevented by the “Fouled from Behind” provisions, then the Referee shall stop play and award a goal to the non-offending team.”

Therefore, if an “obvious and imminent” goal was prevented by the defending player pulling down the attacker then the referee should award a goal, otherwise a penalty shot is awarded.

QUESTION #2: Why can't a goalkeeper go back into his net after being pulled with a legal change for a forward? For example, if I want to turn a 5 v. 3 power play into a 6 v. 3 power play and no one scores. After the penalties expire shouldn't I be allowed to remove my sixth player and return my goalie to the net during the play?

ANSWER #2: If the playing rules did not restrict when a goalkeeper could re-enter the game after being substituted for there would be no accountability for the goalkeeper going to his bench for no reason during a stoppage. Therefore, the restriction was added.

There are four situation where a goalkeeper may be substituted for,

Goalkeeper for player during play

Goalkeeper for goalkeeper during play

Goalkeeper for player during stoppage

Goalkeeper for goalkeeper during stoppage

Situation #2-4 are covered under Rule 205(c); however the first situation is not. The first situation is covered by Rule 205(b) and therefore the extra player may retire to the bench and the goalkeeper may return while play is still going on. Additionally, if a goalkeeper is substituted for during a stoppage and stays on the bench through the next stoppage, the extra attacker may retire at the bench and the goalkeeper may return to play at any time after that original stoppage.

QUESTION #3: I have been told that officials cannot wear goalie skates. Is this true and why can't I wear them?

ANSWER #3: An official may not wear goalkeeper skates while officiating due to that fact that those skates were designed for the purpose of playing goalkeeper. The exposed points of the blade can be dangerous while skating through traffic and among players.

QUESTION #4: During an Adult game, an attacking player shoots the puck into the attacking zone while one of his players is trying to get out, causing a delayed off-side situation. The goalkeeper is around the face-off dots and makes a play for the puck. As he pokes his stick out, it deflects off his stick into the net. It was also determined that the player did not shoot the puck on net, and the puck only ended up in the goal due to the goalie. In this situation, has a goal been legally scored?

ANSWER #4: One of the cardinal rules of ice hockey is a goal can never be scored if the puck entered the attacking zone off-side. This goal should not count.

QUESTION #5: Why is it that after I take the closed book exam, I only get the rule numbers for the questions I got wrong? Without the questions to go along with the rules, what is the point?

ANSWER #5: The policies of the USA Hockey Officiating Program do not allow anyone to send out missed questions or answers. This policy was put in place by our thirteen District Referees-in-Chief (the governing body of the USAH Officiating Program) and this office is not in any position to break it.

The USA Hockey Officiating Program does not send out missed questions for a few reasons; the first being to prevent the development of Answer Keys which would lead to officials undermining the exam process.

Furthermore, by sending out Rule References instead of missed questions we assist in development by letting our officials know which rules they need to become more familiar with rather than memorizing one single answer to one single game situation mentioned on an exam.

By blindly taking an exam on the state of Ohio, you could miss a question asking for a specific answer to a specific question regarding cities (e.g. “What is the state capital?”). After failing the exam and getting a results sheet that told you that you failed that specific question you would look back and learn that the capital of Ohio is Columbus. So all you have learned is one fact about one city out of all the major cities in Ohio.

Now let’s say that your results sheet for the exact same exam mentioned that you missed a question regarding “Cities”, you are more likely to look through your printed exam and notice the questions that apply to city information and then look them up and realize that Columbus is the capital of Ohio, Cleveland claims to have America’s first traffic light, and Cincinnati is home to the first professional city fire department, (http://www.50states.com/facts/ohio.htm, 2009).

Additionally, a significant portion of the Open Book Exam questions are True/False. If we simply gave the question numbers of missed questions, there is a highly likely chance that the official will simply look at the T/F question, and change his answer with no thought of looking up the rule to learn what they actually missed. This process offers no assistance in developing officials and setting them up to succeed for the upcoming season.

If you have any questions regarding the rule references and interpretations we reported to you, we encourage you to contact your USA Hockey Local or State Supervisor of Officials, District Referee-in-Chief, or the National Office for answers.