Ask the Official - Week 16

January 4-10, 2013

QUESTION #1: A team scores and the teams line up for the face off. The puck is dropped, play begins, then the Referee stops play, consults with the other refs, and then disallows the goal. Can this type of decision happen?

ANSWER #1: Rule 502(a) in the USA Hockey Rulebook states,

“The “REFEREE” shall have general supervision of the game and his decision shall be final in all matters occurring before, during or after the game. The role of the official is to “enforce” the rules of the game and in doing so shall have full authority over all participants. The Referee may not change his decision, or that of any other official, after the resumption of play following the rendering of the original decision.”

In other words, the referee may initially signal a goal after a shot but change his decision after conferring with the linemen or goal judge. However, once play resumes the decision is final and may not be changed under any circumstances.

QUESTION #2: We signed up our team to play in a '98 division of a tournament. When we got there they put us in the '97 Division. Can they due this?

ANSWER #2: Due to the fact that the subject of this question lies outside the playing rules we cannot answer this questions at this forum. We recommend contacting the USA Hockey Affiliate body for the host association for this tournament (assuming it was USA Hockey sanctioned). Contact information for Affiliates can be found in the USA Hockey Annual Guidebook which is located under the About USAH link at USAHockey.com.

QUESTION #3: Would it be acceptable for us to adjust our majors and misconducts down when minors are reduced to 1.5 minutes?

ANSWER #3: The “spirit and intent” of the penalty rule is to reduce the length of penalties to compliment reduced period length. This practice has been done for years in many areas of the country prior to the 2011 rule change; however the USA Hockey Affiliate presidents decided to add the language to the USA Hockey Playing Rules to support the concept.

With this in mind, there was no official rule change proposal to USAH Rule 403 (Major Penalties) or Rule 404 (Misconducts) to coincide with the change to Rule 402. However, the USA Hockey Playing Rules Committee is supportive of any local association that wishes to adjust their major and misconduct penalty times to compliment the reduced minors, with the approval of their USA Hockey Affiliate Body.

QUESTION #4: If a player fully lays out on the ice to block a shot, and his momentum carries him into the player taking the shot would that be a penalty?

ANSWER #4: A player who drops to the ice (whether to his knees or otherwise) to block a shot would not be penalized under the tripping rules.

QUESTION #5: During a shoot-out, 1. the player shoots the puck it hits the post falls to the ice and stops. Then the goalie turns and knocks it in. Is that a goal? 2. also in a shoot-out the player is skating very slow, glides, takes the shot which went it. The goal was called off because the referee said the shooter stopped because his feet stopped skating. Should it be a goal?

ANSWER #5: USA Hockey does not have any type of formal rules governing shoot-outs other than those associated with the National Tournaments. However, the procedure and process for shoot-out attempts follow the same rules as penalty shots.

A penalty shot attempt is considered complete once the puck stops its forward momentum toward the goal. If the puck completely stopped and then the goalkeeper knocks it into the goal then the goal should be disallowed. Furthermore, the “forward momentum” guidelines apply to the puck and not the skater. A player may stop skating (taking strides) and glide toward the goal to take a shot.