Ask the Official - Week 8

November 2-8, 2012

QUESTION #1: Recently we had the unfortunate situation where no goalies showed up for the game. We chose to play 6 vs. 5 from the beginning of the game. At one point we were assessed a minor penalty and had to play shorthanded (5 vs. 5 + GK). We proceeded to ice the puck and were subsequently called for icing. When questioned why the icing call was made, the referee explained it was because we "had no numerical disadvantage". We accepted this explanation and continued on. Later on, while playing even strength (6 vs. 5 + GK), the opposing team (5 + GK) iced the puck and were subsequently called for icing. Following the same logic given earlier, this should not have been icing since they were numerically disadvantaged according the the referee. Which way is it?

ANSWER #1: If a team elects to play with six skaters and no goalkeeper they would be considered shorthanded if their line-up was reduced to five players. Similarly, if a team pulls their goalkeeper during a final minute of play and the opposing team shoots the puck (5 + GK vs. 6) down the ice at the open goal and misses, icing should be called.

QUESTION #2: My son is a goalkeeper and I recently purchased a "cat eye cage" for his face-mask. It says on the packaging that it is certified (HECC), but I heard this type of cage is not legal. Is this legal for him to wear?

ANSWER #2: All players and goalkeepers must wear HECC approved helmets and facemasks during games. If the helmet you bought has a valid HECC sticker when it was removed from the box then it should be considered fit for play. Furthermore, a complete listing of HECC approved helmets is listed at HECC.net.

QUESTION #3: My son played a game and the opposing team had two players wearing the Captain's “C” on their jersey. I have never seen this before. It is normal for one captain, and two alternates. Any rule involved with this?

ANSWER #3: There is no rule that prevents a team from having two players (or a goalkeeper) with captain “C’s” on their sweaters. However, only one player (non-goalkeeper) may exercise the privileges of a captain during a game (USAH, Rule 202).

QUESTION #4: Are the on-ice officials responsible for checking the coaching certification status of team officials before a game, especially at Tier 1 and/or Tier II levels? If not, then who has that responsibility? What happens if a team does not have a bench coach who is properly certified for a game at the Tier 1 and/or Tier II level? Is the game canceled and forfeited? What happens if it’s discovered after the game has concluded?

ANSWER #4: The game officials are responsible for checking the game sheet before each game to verify that each coach has their USA Hockey Coaching Education Program (CEP) Number listed. If the number is missing (the coach can/will not provide), the game continues and the Referee must forward the issue to his Local Supervisor of Officials who will report the incident to the team’s local governing body (association, league, affiliate, etc.). The governing body will decide the outcome of the issue.

Under no circumstances are the game officials mandated to declare a game a forfeit. They simply report it to the governing body.

QUESTION #5: I got a major plus game misconduct for a guy running into my stick after a shot, and he broke his something in his jaw and popped two teeth out. Is that right to get a game out of that and where in the rule book is it?

ANSWER #5: Rule 621(b) in the USA Hockey Playing Rules states,

“A major plus a game misconduct penalty shall be assessed to any player who injures an opponent as a result of high sticking.”

Furthermore, it is the interpretation of the USA Hockey Playing Rules that all players are responsible for controlling their sticks at all times. While some professional leagues have the rule that exempts a player from responsibility while following-through on a shot or pass, USA Hockey does not have this interpretation.