Ask the Official - Week 12

November 25 - December 1, 2011

The USA Hockey Rulebook and Playing Rules Casebook can be found on the Officials page atwww.usahockey.com.

Answers to other questions may be found at the Officials page atwww.usahockey.com.

Thank you for all your submissions.If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us atasktheofficial@usahockey.org.

QUESTION: I was called for hooking in a most interesting way. I was skating with the puck when it started getting away from me a little bit. My opponent who was skating side by side with me plays the puck. I had a little more momentum so I tried to get puck back by lifting her stick. In the process my stick runs up hers and she decides to hold it under her armpit. I didn't want to yank it out and didn't want to hurt her. I literally held on and just went for the ride. Should I just let go of the stick? I thought about it afterwards, it probably would of stayed in her armpit a second or two and maybe they would of called it the other way. Is this a Holding the Stick infraction?

ANSWER:While we can’t make a decision regarding your situation without seeing the play first-hand, the official possibly could have called hooking, holding the stick, or both.

While your stick did end up in a position where you may have hooked the opponent, the question remains did the stick end up impacting the opponent playing the puck? If the hooking action made no impact on the opponent (no competitive advantage gained or lost illegally) then the hooking penalty probably should not have been called. However, the opponent’s action of “clamping” down on your stick and preventing you from using it does warrant a minor penalty for Holding the Stick.

Ultimately, we cannot make a decision since we were not there to witness it. The Referee may have called it wrong due to poor awareness or improper positioning. Good call or bad, the game must move on.

QUESTION: What dictates what level of referee you are required to use (i.e. what level can referee midgets, who can Level 2 refs officiate, etc.)?

ANSWER: While USA Hockey does provide recommendations for officiating systems and levels, all game assignments are at the discretion of the Local Hockey Officials Association or Assignor. They make their decisions based on the ability and limitations of each official based on rule knowledge, skating ability, and other occupational skills.

QUESTION: Under USA Hockey Rules, is a goalkeeper permitted to play with a broken stick?

ANSWER: No player (including goalkeepers) may participate in play with a broken stick.

QUESTION: I feel the Rule book is contradicting per the following two references:

Rule 617(b)3 - "A goal shall be legally scored if the puck shall have been deflected into the goal by striking any part of the attacking player (skate, hand; etc)."

Rule 627(c) - "Kicking the puck shall be permitted provided the puck is not kicked by an attacking player and entered the goal either directly or after deflecting off any player including the goalkeeper."

I would be interested to hear USA Hockey's take on the deflection by an attacking player. I feel like there is no clear cut answer in the rule book.

ANSWER:Rule 617(b)3 addresses situations where a puck is legally shot and is deflected (no intent) into the net off an attacking player. This is different than a puck that is intentionally “directed” into the goal (see Glossary).

Rule 627(c) addresses situations where the puck is kicked by an attacking player and enters the goal. Since the initial force behind the puck’s movement was the attacking player’s skate the goal cannot be awarded if it enters the goal as a result of a deflection by either team.

The initial force behind the movement of the puck into the goal (stick vs. skate) is the difference between these two rules.

QUESTION: My son is a goalie rostered on one team but there is a team in a higher age division who has an injured goalie and needs someone for practices.Can my son practice with them?Is there a rule about being on the ice if you are not rostered with that team?

ANSWER:Since all roster questions are better answered by District or State Registrars we suggest you direct this question to them. Registrars are responsible for traking all player and team registration requirements and eligibilites. Their contact information can be found in the USA Hockey Annual Guidebook which is located under the AboutUSA link at USAHockey.com.