Ask the Official - Week 16

December 23 - 29, 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 at asktheofficial@usahockey.org.

QUESTION: Is there any rule that states the exact description of the officials uniform sweater that must be worn. With the several different style sweaters on the market with the black and white strips and a solid black mesh under the arm and the newer NHL-style with the orange around the arm and down the inside of the arm, does USA Hockey allow these to be worn for games?

ANSWER: Strictly speaking, the traditional style of officiating sweater (no mesh or other detail under the arms) is the only type of sweater that is permitted to be worn by the USA Hockey Officiating Program. However, due to limited budgets and what might be available for purchase this has not been a strictly enforced rule.

QUESTION: What is the youngest age that you can referee at?

ANSWER: USA Hockey has no minimum or maximum ages for officials.

Regardless of the official’s registration level, it is highly recommended that officials not work games of their own age classification or higher. Generally, officials can successfully officiate as young as age 10. However, some local areas do have minimum age requirements due to their State’s specific Child Labor Laws. In this instance, you will need to contact your State or Local Supervisor of Officials or District Referee-in-Chief for specific information. Contact information can be found at the Directory page under the Officials banner atwww.usahockey.com.

QUESTION: If the defending team ices the puck, and the puck goes through the goal crease before crossing the goal line and does not go into the goal, is icing still called? I'm pretty sure it is because rule 624 (b) says icing will be called if it crosses the goal line but not if it goes into the goal.

ANSWER: Icing shall not be nullified if the puck passes through the goalkeeper’s crease prior to crossing the goal line (and not entering the goal).

QUESTION: During a game, a defeding team player directed the puck foirward with his glove to another player on his own team who was positioned outside his defending zone. I stopped play for a hand-pass since this player did not totally happen within the defending zone. Correst call?

ANSWER: Hand-passes may only be completed by two teammates when the puck is passed and received in their defending zone. The location of the puck is the determining factor in this call.

QUESTION: A referee informed me that it is against the rules for a coach to whistle for his players to change on the fly, yet I can't find it in the rules.

ANSWER: There is no specific rule in the USA Hockey Playing Rules that prevents a coach from signaling line changes by whistling. However, if the whistling becomes a distraction during the game (players are stopping, etc.) the coach should find another method of calling his players to the bench.