Ask the Official - Week 6

October 19 - 26, 2012

QUESTION #1: Team A was short handed and cleared the cleared the puck from their end-zone to Team B’s end and icing was mistakenly called. The face-off was held in Team B’s end after the mistake. My question is was this the correct spot for the face-off? I thought it should have been at least outside the Team B’s defending end-zone instead of them suffering for the officials mistake? Team A was awarded a face-off in the offensive zone for nothing and it resulted in a goal.

ANSWER #2: If the officials error in calling icing the ensuing face-off should be located at the nearest end-zone face-off spot of where the puck was located when play was stopped. This rule was voted in place by the USA Hockey Board of Directors (the governing body of USA Hockey) with the support of the Playing Rules Committee six years ago.

While it could be argued that the defending team is penalized by the location of the face-off, the spirit and intent of rule is to not penalize the team that shot the puck down the ice legally. In your situation, Team A shot the puck down the ice legally, why should the playing rules bring the puck back to the neutral zone and give the other team a territorial gain they didn’t gain through play (Team A did absolutely nothing wrong and yet they would be penalized by a loss of ice)?

QUESTION #2: Team A ices the puck from their own defensive zone. The Back Official does not signal/call icing and the Front Official allows play to continue as he was unsure as to why icing was not signaled. The play continues in the Team A end-zone and Team B scores. The Team A Captain approached the Referee to question the missed icing. The Referee asked the linesman if there was an icing missed and the linesman replied that they missed the call. What should occur in this situation?

ANSWER #2: Situation #3 on Page 152 of the USA Hockey Playing Rules Casebook states,

“A goal is scored; however, before the play resumes the Linesman notifies the Referee that the play should have been called for icing. What should the Referee do?

The Referee must disallow the goal and the face-off would take place at the normal icing face-off spot. Rule References 502(a).

Although procedurally, the icing situation was not handled correctly, the obligation of the officials is to do their best to make the right call.”

This decision must be made before play resumes.

QUESTION #3: How can an Official change a ruling from a minor infraction to a major after the game ends? What happens to the player if he wasn’t ejected during the game? Is he suspended during the next game or does he play without penalty? Is the major only a reported infraction and not implemented or is it served in subsequent game(s).

ANSWER #3: A referee may not change a call on a score sheet after a game. If he notices that a penalty is entered incorrectly (clerical error), this can be corrected with a note on the score sheet. However, if he notices that a rule was misapplied (a game misconduct or match penalty was missed) during a game he must sign the score sheet and submit a Game Report to his Local Supervisor of Officials.

The submitted Game Report will be forwarded to the governing body of the team (local association, league, or affiliate) who will review the play and decide if further supplementary discipline is needed. All associations, leagues, and affiliates have the authority to suspend players (USAH Rule 401a).

QUESTION #4: How late can a game for 10 & Under (Squirt) teams start?

ANSWER #4: Due to the fact that this question is not directly address in the USA Hockey Playing Rules we encourage you to contact your local USA Hockey Affiliate with this question. All Affiliates are the governing body for hockey in their respective areas and make the decisions regarding start times and period lengths. Contact information can be found in the USA Hockey Annual Guidebook which is located under the AboutUSAH link at USAHockey.com.

QUESTION #5: Three officials were working a game, when a scramble developed at the corner of the net. The referee lost sight of puck and blew the whistle. When the goalie stood up no one could find the puck. Both officials and players thought puck was in goalkeeper's pads. Eventually, puck was discovered in the net, under the padding. The officials ruled “no goal” because they did not see the puck enter the net. No real grief from the coach since it was a 8-0 game anyway, but what if it were the championship tournament game in overtime? That could be a real mess!

ANSWER #5: The Referee must be certain that the puck entered the goal legally to award a goal. This is why positioning and awareness are critical to officiating.