

The *Look Up Line* (Hockey Warning Track)
A Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center Perspective
USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, Rochester Hockey Foundation
and the Rochester Youth Hockey Association

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Maybe you have heard about or seen the *Look Up Line* and wondered what the orange ice strip is all about? This creative idea was initiated by a hockey player, Thomas Smith, after he sustained two spine injuries, the second of which resulted in partial paralysis. Thomas is passionate about ice hockey and wants to find ways to decrease the risk of injury for other players. The *Look Up Line* is described on his website, where you can also find a video demonstrating how to install one in your ice arena: <http://justcureparalysis.org/look-up-line/>

The *Look Up Line* aims to provide a stimulus for education about injury risk and prevention, alert players that they are near the boards, promote a “heads up” position, and contribute to less checking from behind and boarding. But many questions remain: Will it work? Will all ages benefit? Will male and female players respond to the line the same? How will we know if it really helps to prevent spine and brain injuries?

Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine, USA Hockey , Minnesota Hockey and our local ice hockey organizations have worked together to promote and implement numerous safety programs, including:

*** Heads Up, Don't Duck**

Hit the boards or goal posts with an arm, a leg or anything but your head first. If head contact can't be avoided, keep your head up.
<http://www.usahockey.com/page/show/1011484-heads-up-hockey>

*** Fair Play Program**

Modifies behavior by penalizing and tracking dangerous infractions, such as charging, boarding and checking from behind.

*** Rule Changes**

- 1) Award penalties for unintentional head hits
- 2) Delay body checking in games until Bantam
- 3) Game ejection in Tier 3 and game misconduct in Tier 1 and 2 Junior A Hockey for fighting

*** Safety Clinics**

On and Off-Ice (3 years with RHF and RYHA)

USA Hockey and Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine will again team up to study the *Look Up Line* through player surveys, video analysis, visual tracking technology and the Catastrophic Injury Registry database. We firmly believe that all our efforts toward safety, regardless of the time or expense, are worth it if we can prevent one severe traumatic brain injury or one spine injury with paralysis.



Rochester Graham Arena- Rink 2 (Photo courtesy of Bob Montrose)



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