Ask the Official - Week 15

December 28 - January 3, 2012

QUESTION #1: The officials make a mistake and call icing against a team that is short handed. Where does the face-off take place?

ANSWER #1: Rule 624(c) in the USA Hockey Playing Rules states,

“If the Officials shall have erred in calling an “icing the puck” infraction (regardless of whether either team is shorthanded) a last play face-off (end zone face-off spot nearest to the location of the puck when play was stopped) shall occur.”

QUESTION #2: If a player kicks the puck into his own goal is it a goal for the opposing team?

ANSWER #2: Similar to high sticking the puck a goal shall be allowed if a player kicks the puck into his own goal.

QUESTION #3: Can you specifically define the “normal shoulder height” of a player for the purpose of determining High Sticking? Would this be while the player is standing perfectly upright or while the player is in a crouched (and lower down) skating stance? A player could change his shoulder height by quite a few inches depending on how “normal shoulder height” is interpreted.

ANSWER #3: The “normal height of the shoulders” is interpreted to be the normal positioning of the shoulders when the player is participating in the game (standing, skating, etc.). A referee would not ignore high stick contact just because the player bent his knees to brace for a body check.

The “spirit and intent” of the “normal height of the shoulders” language is to prevent the referee from penalizing marginal and incidental contact to the head of an opponent while the player is lying on the ice.

QUESTION #4: A few years ago it was not a penalty for high sticking if contact was made during follow-through after shooting the puck. In reading the current rules, it appears that this rule has changed?

ANSWER #4: The USA Hockey high sticking rules were changed during the nineties. Since then the USAH Playing Rules have always held all participants (especially at the youth level) accountable for controlling their sticks at all times.

QUESTION #5: After receiving a penalty the officials drop the puck while we had too many players on the ice (five instead of four). I noticed there were too many men and I yelled at one of my players to come off as he comes by the bench which he does. We continue to skate up ice into their zone and score. The linesman tells the referee about the player coming off late. The referee waves off the goal and gives me another penalty for Too Many Players. Was this the correct call?

ANSWER #5: There should not be a penalty assessed in this situation since the on-ice officials are partially responsible for making sure the correct number of players are on the ice prior to dropping the puck. However, the goal should be disallowed since play was started with an incorrect number of players on the ice. The face-off should be conducted at the nearest last-play face-off spot or outside the attacking end zone if the offending team is in their attacking zone.