

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

New Concussion Language Highlights Ice Hockey Rules Revisions for 2010-11

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (May 19, 2010) – As it has done with all National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) sports, the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee has drafted new language regarding concussions to henceforth be included in the NFHS Ice Hockey Rules Book.

Rule 2-6-1 was among 13 rules revisions approved by the NFHS Ice Hockey Rules Committee at its April 25-26 meeting in Indianapolis. The rules changes subsequently were approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The new concussion language is designed to help reduce risk to high school athletes. The revised rule now reads as follows:

“Any player (including goalkeeper) who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.”

As a means of specifically identifying and streamlining the officiating systems that are legal in high school ice hockey games, the rules committee revised Rule 5-2-1. It now reads as follows:

“The two-official system consists of two referees. The three-official system consists of two referees and one linesman. The four-official system consists of two referees and two linesmen.”

“The officiating systems were changed to provide for two referees on the ice at all times,” NFHS Ice Hockey Rules Committee chairperson Rick Majerus said. “Because of the speed of the game and other risk minimization factors, it was felt that there should be two officials on the ice who can call penalties at all times. The removal of the one-referee system helps reduce risk and produces a better flow to the game.

“Previously, the only way a state could use the two referees-two linesmen system was under the experimental protocol offered by the NFHS. With this change, any of these systems now can be legally used in regular-season or tournament competition.”

In an effort to reduce the number of injuries, Rule 6-19 now reads “A player shall not make contact with an opposing player’s head or neck area in any manner.” The penalty for doing so is a minor or major or disqualification at the discretion of the referee. This infraction was previously located in Rule 6-40-3 (“Unnecessary Roughness”), and it now becomes a separate rule with some language modification.

With the addition of Rule 6-42, by state association adoption, state association-authorized video replay may be used in games for reviewing goals and undetected goals, and for determining the correct time on the clock. Procedures shall be determined by state association policy and procedures.

“Video replay was added to the rules book as an optional process to be determined by each state association,” Majerus said. “Some states have been experimenting with video replay for the past few years and have found that it works well. It is important that video replay is used to get the call right the first time. In addition, it removes further scrutiny of any game after its completion.”

Since some high schools play games on college and/or National Hockey League rinks, Rules 1-3-1 and 1-5-1 were modified to be consistent with their rules codes.

Rule 1-3-1 was changed to read “Goal posts shall be set between 10 feet (3.01m) and 15 feet” (formerly read “12 feet [3.66m] and 15 feet”), and Rule 1-5-1 now reads “ ... blue lines drawn 64 feet (19.51m)” (formerly read “ ... blue lines drawn 60 feet [18.29m]”).

The rules committee revised Rule 3-4-4 (addresses the tooth and mouth protector) and Rule 3-5-1 (addresses padding on hard and unyielding items).

In an effort to enhance the safety of officials and particularly with regard to protection of their eyes, Rule 5-2-3 was amended with “ ... recommended that on-ice officials wear a half-shield.”

In a playing rule change, Rule 6-12-8j now states “When puck is grasped by hand (not a hand pass), play is stopped.” The committee added Rule 4-10-3, which states “During a delayed whistle, if neither team attempts to take control of the puck, the official shall stop play.”

Two changes were made to time-out procedures. Rule 6-37-4 now also permits a coach to call a time-out. Rule 6-26-4 stipulates that a player serving a penalty must remain in the penalty box during a time-out.

Ice hockey is played by 37,255 boys in 1,601 high schools nationwide, according to the 2008-09 High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. Additionally, 8,261 girls in 558 high schools nationwide participate in ice hockey.

About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and Rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing Rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.5 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces

publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org.

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