



Focus on Impact Penalties-Roughing After the Whistle

A General Reminder about Impact Penalties and Non-Calls

The goal of each of these “Focus on Impact Penalties” is to illustrate how officials can use both penalties and non-calls to clearly communicate what is allowed and what is not allowed.

Here are the two questions that defines impact penalties from non-calls:

- 1. Would this penalty send a very clear message to the players, coaches and the entire arena about the type of play that will be permitted?**
- 2. Would this penalty provide teachable information about how the “guilty player” can change their play to avoid a penalty in the future?**

If the answer to both of these is “Yes” then the referee has an opportunity to make an impact penalty call. Ultimately, every penalty should be an impact penalty.

If the answer to both of these questions is “No” then the referee does not call a penalty; if one of the questions is “No” then the referee needs to decide if calling the penalty makes sense (often, if one you have one NO and one YES, then you probably do not call a penalty).

For a No-Call, the referee needs to decide if this is a standard no-call or if it needs to become an impact non-call. Generally, to create an impact non-call, the referee will add a verbal statement that has three goals: (1) draws attention to a non-call (2) is phrased to tell the players what was done to avoid a penalty, and (3) encourage more of this behaviour based on not receiving a penalty and the officials’ praise.

What the Rule Book Says

Rule 7.9 Highlights:

- Hockey Canada feels that there is too much contact being made after the whistle. Officials are strongly encouraged to penalize contact after the whistle.
- Players are expected to skate away at the whistle...no pushing...just stop.
- The referee may call a minor or 5+Game Misconduct or a Match.
- Officials are encouraged to make the team that made the first push kill a penalty (7.9-Interpretation 1).

Why It Matters

There are two problems with RAW. The first is the nature of head contact, in that two people pushing each other will escalate to head contact or start at the head. Second, RAW can be a pre-cursor to increased illegal in-game play. Remember, that you are officiating minor hockey (children) and the fans are generally parents. When RAW occurs, fans may start to cheer or yell for multiple reasons (fear of safety for their child,

cheers the rough play, or generally getting into the intensity of the game). Regardless of the reason, the increased violent intensity can easily spill over into other parts of the game and the referee can lose control by allowing RAW to occur.

Example of an Impact Call and Non-Call

- 1) No Call: A6 is standing in front of goalie B who has covered the puck. The whistle goes and B8, trying to stop before running into A6, catches an edge and falls into A6. No penalty.
- 2) No Call: The whistle goes, A10 looks as though he is about to push B7 when the referee assertively says “that’s it, we are done”. A10 stops and skates away. No penalty.
- 3) Impact Penalty: B88 sees a loose puck in front of goalie A and tries to poke the puck at the same time the goalie covers the puckⁱ. The goalie covers the puck just as B88 makes contact with the puck/goalie glove and the whistle goes. A7 sees this and gives B88 a push after the whistle. Penalty for RAW.
- 4) Impact Penalty: A7 pokes goalie B while goalie B has the puck and B99 pushes A7 in the chest after the play stops. Give A7 two minors since the poke started the RAW. Give B99 a minor for RAW.
- 5) Impact Penalty: The linesman calls an off-side. B8 gives A2 a push into the boards after the play has stopped and A2 pushes B8 back. Assess B8 two minors (for being the one who started it) for RAW and A2 one minor.

How to make a non-call, an impact non-call

In general, there are no situations where RAW the whistle happens and a penalty is not called. However, there can be situations where contact looks like RAW, but the only one who knows it is not is the referee. For example, in example 1, B8 catches an edge and falls violently into A6. The referee needs to make a clear statement to the players around her that B8 fell accidentally and therefore, no penalty will be called. For example, the referee may say “hey...B8 was trying to stop...fell accidentally...nothing there...whistle went...all done...”

In the case of example #2, the referee was able to stop the player A10 from pushing aB8. The referee may then add, “nothing there, A10 held up” as a way of encouraging players to stop at the whistle.

A General Comment

The main goal of both impact penalties and non-calls is to discourage the first player from pushing by making that team kill a penalty while encouraging players that do not push at the whistle by making impact non-calls. Remember, if you make the first push go away...then there can be no second, third, or forth push.

ⁱ B88’s incidental, simultaneous and controlled contact with the goalie covering the puck does not need a penalty.