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DATE: 09 September 2024
TO: Member Referees-in-Chief / Officiating staff
FROM: Dan Hanoomansingh
Manager, Officiating
RE: **Clarification on 2024-25 Playing Rule Changes**

As education begins on the approved changes to the Playing Rules for the 2024-25 season, the Officiating Program wishes to provide the following clarifications regarding changes to Rule 6.3 (e) and Rule 10.2, with the objective of uniform application across all Members and leagues.

We ask Referees-in-Chief and officiating staff to communicate this information to instructors and officiating coaches, so that it is disseminated appropriately throughout your programs. Please note that this memo is intended as guidance to leadership and is not necessarily intended for public distribution.

Please direct any questions to Dan Hanoomansingh, at dhanoomansingh@hockeycanada.ca.

Rule 6.3 (e)(i)

Text: Any stoppage of play occurring in the end zone as the result of the puck going out of play or being unplayable will result in the ensuing face-off taking place in that end zone at the face-off spot nearest to where the puck was last legally played, regardless of whether the defending or attacking team causes the stoppage.

Key Points:

1. If the play is in the end-zone and an attacking player causes the puck to go out of play or become unplayable, the stoppage of play will remain in the attacking zone, except when the attacking team is assessed a penalty or commits another infringement of the rules.
2. This rule applies where the puck is already legally in the attacking zone prior to going out of play or becoming unplayable. This rule does not apply to situations where a player shoots the puck from their neutral or defending zone and the puck goes out of play in their attacking zone.

Examples:

1. An attacking player freezes the puck against the boards in the attacking zone. Where will the face-off take place?

Officials may interpret this situation in one of two ways:

- i. Officials may determine this to be a 'no-fault' situation, where multiple players have become involved along the boards and the principles of safe and fair require a stoppage of play. In this case, the face-off will take place in the attacking zone, as per Rule 6.3 (e)(i)
 - ii. Officials may determine that the attacking player has deliberately frozen the puck against the boards to gain a stoppage of play, which is a violation of Rule 10.1 – Delay of Game and should be penalized with a Minor penalty. In this situation, the face-off will take place in the offending team's defending zone.
2. The puck is unintentionally batted out of play by an attacking player, either with a hand or a high stick. Where will the face-off take place?

Assuming that the puck goes directly out of play after being batted by the attacking player, the stoppage of play occurs because the puck is out of play. Therefore, the face-off would be in the attacking zone.

3. A player shoots the puck either from their defending zone or the neutral zone, and the puck goes out of play in the attacking zone, either directly from the shot OR after deflecting off the glass, boards, or cross bar. Where will the face-off take place?

The face-off will take place at the nearest face-off location in the zone where the puck was shot, without giving a territorial advantage to the offending team. The face-off would not take place in the attacking zone, because the puck was never legally played within the attacking zone.

4. Rule 6.3 (d)(iv) says that if "an infringement of a rule, other than a time penalty, has been committed by an attacking player in their attacking zone, the ensuing face-off will be in the neutral zone at the nearest face-off spot". Does this conflict with Rule 6.3 (e)? If not, in what situations will this rule apply?

This rule applies to situations where an attacking player has committed an infraction of the rules such as high-sticking the puck, hand pass, or an illegally scoring a goal. In these situations, the face-off would take place in the neutral zone. The key is that the play is stopped as the result of this infraction, rather than because the puck has gone out of play.

Rule 10.2

Text: A hand pass occurs when a player makes a deliberate attempt to stop, knock down, or push the puck with their hand, and a teammate in the neutral or attacking zone gains control of the puck. This includes when a hand pass occurs and the puck deflects off any person or object, prior to the teammate gaining possession and control of the puck.

Key Points:

1. The term “deliberate attempt” means that a player acted with the intent of stopping, knocking down, or pushing the puck with their hand, even if the puck did not travel in the direction intended.

Examples:

1. The puck is shot in the air and a player raises their hand to block the puck. The puck strikes the raised hand and goes directly to a teammate who gains possession and control of the puck.

HAND PASS. The intent of the offending player was to play the puck with their hand and an advantage was gained.

2. A player has both hands on their stick and the puck strikes their hand and goes to a teammate who gains possession and control of the puck.

PLAY CONTINUES. There is no deliberate attempt to play the puck with the hand.