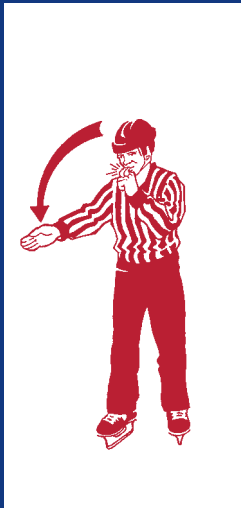
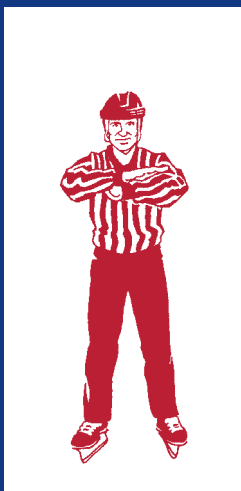


*USA Hockey*



# ADVANCED OFFICIALS MANUAL

*Updated February 2025*



# USA HOCKEY ADVANCED OFFICIALS MANUAL

*Updated February 2025*



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## FOREWORD

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*Welcome to the final installment of the USA Hockey Officiating Manual Series. Your participation in officiating to this point has been an important part of the overall hockey environment. Hopefully, you've enjoyed the experience.*

*The advanced level official tends to be a unique breed within USA Hockey. There never seems to be enough of them (at least in the eyes of the players, coaches and spectators) and their involvement above the grassroots levels of hockey limits their availability. Development of advanced caliber officials is an ongoing challenge for the USA Hockey Officiating Program. This manual is a step in the right direction.*

*There may be some concepts presented in this publication you have never seen before or maybe never thought you would see presented in a USA Hockey Officiating Manual. The official who has fifteen years of experience and has been reading the same material over and over during that time will learn something new. In addition, the "newer" experienced official who is exploring the advanced level for the first time will be fascinated by the intangibles associated with the art of officiating.*

*However, you will also discover that there is no magic formula to successful officiating other than performing the basics. Changing your positioning a few feet either way does not necessarily provide you with a better field of vision. The basic level official needs to maximize is/her field of vision just as the advanced official does. Although this manual describes some advanced techniques to help you respond better to a faster paced and more physical game, it doesn't replace the basic positioning and procedural techniques presented in the previous manuals. The material presented here should only be used when necessary and not as common practice.*

*Where the advanced level official does have a tremendous advantage over the basic level official is in the area of game management. This can be attributed to years of experience. The concept of game management is discussed thoroughly in this manual along with some other mental aspects of officiating. Pay special attention to these areas as, assuming you've mastered the basics, these areas may provide the most benefit in your endeavor to become a better official.*

*In addition, the expectations of you as an advanced level official within the USA Hockey community exceed simply your on-ice performance. Your involvement off the ice is an important part of your overall success. After all, there is more to life than just officiating.*

*Thank you for your participation.*

# PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The way you handle yourself as an official, both on and off the ice, and your appearance will play a part in determining your success. Successful officials gain instant respect and credibility by looking and acting like a professional. Although your overall acceptability will mostly be determined by your on-ice judgment, a professional approach to your appearance and mannerisms will complement your on-ice performance and lend more credibility to your role as a game manager. The Basic and Intermediate Level Manuals carefully detail several aspects of appearance that are expected from a good official. You may wish to review the basics outlined in the Basic and Intermediate Manuals prior to moving on to more advanced concepts discussed in this manual.

## Essentials Of Looking Like A Professional

Higher levels of hockey require that officials present themselves in a highly professional manner at all times. Oftentimes, officials are not only representing themselves or officials as a whole, but also represent the league or governing body of the game being played. A well-groomed, neat and professional official, both on and off the ice, will represent everyone involved with the game in a positive way. That positive influence will lead to acceptance by players, coaches and management and will make your job as an official easier.

Off-ice dress, before and after the game, should include a coat and tie or suit. Your appearance as you arrive to the rink and leave after the game will be noticed, and a professional image must be portrayed. A businesslike attitude on and off the ice will allow the players and coaches to respect you as a game manager. Your attention should be focused on the task at hand and your ability to maintain a businesslike approach fosters the image that you take pride in your work and are in tune to your role as a game manager.



While on the ice, be sure to have your game face on to help maintain your focus on the game and to give the impression you are doing your job well. A serious but friendly approach will establish that you are in control while still developing a good rapport with the players and coaches. A good official is polite to everyone involved in the game, including spectators and rink personnel. As an official, you expect to be treated professionally and politely. Treating people the way you expect to be treated is common courtesy that is ingrained in everyone at a young age.

## On-Ice Body Language And Its Effect On Your Credibility

A professional image can be enhanced by being aware of your on-ice mannerisms and body language. Signals, gestures, facial expressions and verbal communication will all play a part in portraying a positive and professional on-ice image. Here are some things to consider regarding your on-ice body language.

- **Gestures** – Gestures or body language are little things that can give the wrong impression to players, coaches, or spectators. For example, constantly fidgeting with your sweater or helmet gives the impression you are nervous or uncomfortable. Having your thumbs out during wash out or delay signals shows signs of an official that does not care about doing things right. Intimidating postures, such as holding your hands on your hips or pointing with your index finger may give the impression that you are angry or impatient. These little things are often neglected by officials.



- **Facial Expressions** – Control of your emotions and facial expressions is another area that is often overlooked by officials. We all understand the importance of controlling your emotions while on the ice, and yet it is our nature to have emotions. Oftentimes, the emotional state of the official is visible through facial expressions. Although we want to be in control at all times, there are times when it is appropriate to smile or be angry. However, the official who always appears angry will intimidate players and would appear to be out of control. The official that is always laughing or smiling lacks the intensity and focus that is necessary to be successful. Awareness of your facial expressions resulting from your emotions is probably a happy medium that all officials should shoot for.
- **Verbal Intonation** – Strong verbal communication is an important part of being an official. Once again, the successful official will be aware of the communication needs during each situation and will adjust accordingly. A firm voice may be needed in difficult situations while a soft tone may be best for one on one conversations with a player or coach. An official who is always firm and loud is intimidating and does not communicate effectively.

### Basic Skating Posture (During Play)

Your basic skating posture during play also affects your appearance. An official who is skating with an upright posture, while still bending at the knees, will be perceived as having a better view of the play. Your head should always be facing the action in a manner that will give you the best possible view of all players participating in the play. Long powerful strides will not only make you a more efficient skater, but will also be perceived positively by those involved with the game. Front to back arm swing with minimal movement across the front of your body will eliminate unnecessary motions and portray an official that is in control. A controlled skating style will allow you as an official to be an efficient skater who will generally be in the proper position and will enhance a professional overall appearance.



### Post Game Events

In many cases, officials will want to grab a bite to eat and a beverage after a well worked game. This also provides an opportunity to socialize with your partners and discuss some situations that may have occurred during the game. Keep in mind, though, that you are still representing the officiating community in addition to the teams and the league long after you have left the rink. Most officials have future assignments questioned because of off-ice activities and not because of on-ice performance.

Whenever possible, avoid establishments that players or coaches frequent. Difficult situations will be avoided and you will be able to discuss parts of the game with your partners. While running into players, coaches and spectators is unavoidable, use discretion when discussing the game and be cautious in discussing various situations. If you do discuss any parts of the game or other games with players, coaches or fans, be diplomatic and avoid situations that may become uncomfortable. As always, avoid discussing your partners or other officials at all costs. This would only lead to trouble at some point down the road.

Your behavior around your hotel will also be under constant scrutiny. Many times, the players or fans may be staying at the same location. If you have a game scheduled for the next day, plan on a quiet evening and retire early. You can imagine what the perception would be if you were to walk into the hotel during the wee hours of the morning and be spotted by someone representing one of the teams or the league. It is best to avoid these situations all together.

### Personal Appearance Review

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about personal appearance. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Discuss why it is important to look like a professional when arriving at the rink to officiate, particularly at higher level games.
2. Describe some body language issues that give the wrong impression of an official on the ice.
3. Relate how skating posture is important to your acceptance as an official.
4. In going out after the game for a meal and/or beverage, what are some “do’s” and “don’ts?”

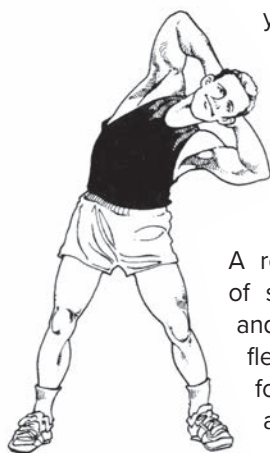
# PHYSICAL CONDITIONING

Advanced level officiating requires tremendous physical fitness on the part of the official. The games are fast, hard fought and difficult to officiate when fatigued or out of shape. High level officials are athletes just like the players. During their pre-season training camps, they are expected to meet certain physical demands which are no different than what is expected from the players at the highest levels. This year-round commitment to physical fitness has enabled them to perform at the highest level, earning the respect of the players and coaches along the way.

The Officiating Manual series has given you some basic information to help you become physically conditioned. The programs and ideas presented have been simple and easy to incorporate into your daily routine. However, the information provided is far from being a complete program for high level fitness. More information from experts in the field are necessary for you to establish a comprehensive training program that is right for you. USA Hockey recommends you contact your local gym or physician for detailed information on physical conditioning techniques and programs.

## Dedication To High Level Workouts

Although we cannot provide you with a complete workout program, it is important to emphasize the importance of developing a program that is right for you. Once the program is established, it takes dedication and commitment to stick to it and receive the greatest benefit.



There are several components to a successful conditioning program.

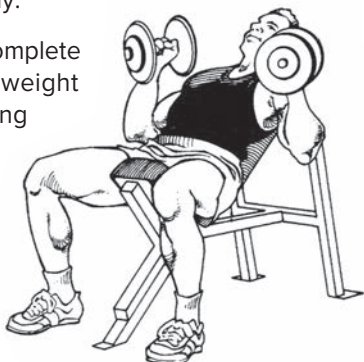
First and foremost is stretching.

A regular routine must be established of stretching every day, both prior to and after exercise. Stretching promotes flexibility and prepares your muscles for work. Failure to stretch thoroughly and properly will often result in injury.

The Basic and Intermediate Manuals provides some information

on stretching including some basic stretches that can be used daily.

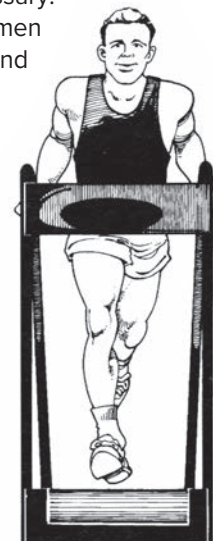
Another component of a complete conditioning program is weight training. Any weight training program should encompass the entire body and include the advice of a professional. Obviously, weight training is important for adding strength to the legs in



order to promote a powerful skating stride and stability. Upper body strength is also necessary to provide stability and allow the official to control a player when necessary. After all, you can pretty much guarantee the player is weight training for upper body strength. The arms, shoulders, chest, and back are all areas that should be utilized to develop strength in the upper body. Finally, the abdomen (stomach area) is also an important area of the body where weight training is necessary.

A strong and well conditioned abdomen will help minimize lower back pain and enhance the official's appearance.

The final component of a complete conditioning program addresses the cardiovascular system, strengthening your heart and lungs and building endurance. Running, cycling and other aerobic exercises are activities that help improve your overall health and strengthen your cardiovascular system. All of these components, done properly and in the correct proportions, will comprise a complete conditioning program that puts you in the same class as the athletes.



## Fundamentals Of Nutrition

Although a conditioning program is a necessary component of your total fitness, it cannot stand alone in helping you achieve maximum performance. The Intermediate Manual discussed some basic nutritional guidelines for before and after a game. Sound nutrition habits must be followed at all times to complement your conditioning efforts and to help you live a healthy life. The information provided here is not a complete program, but is simply designed to give you a basic understanding of the necessary parts of a sound nutritional diet.



- **Fluids (water)** - Plenty of fluids should be consumed before, during and after every activity. Water is simply the best source of fluid replacement. Fruit juices, fluid replacement drinks and specialized sport drinks are also adequate fluid sources.
- **Carbohydrates (store energy)** - Carbohydrates are an energy source that is oftentimes stored in the body and used during activity. Cereals, pasta, bread and potatoes are excellent sources of carbohydrates along with fresh fruits. These foods consist of high complex carbohydrates while also being low in fat.



- **Protein (builds/repairs muscle)** - Protein is a necessary nutrient for muscle development and repair. Lean meat, poultry, fish, some vegetables (broccoli, beans) and low fat dairy products (cottage cheese, yogurt, skim milk) are all excellent sources of protein. Low fat dairy products also provide necessary calcium and other minerals. The meats must be broiled or baked, as fried foods contribute way too much fat.



- **Sugars (immediate energy)** - Sugars provide a quick energy (but short lasting) source. Candy and fresh fruits are foods that are high in sugar.
- **Fat (avoid excess)** - Fats are high in calories, slow digesting and provide minimal nutritional value. Fried foods, processed foods, fatty meats and high fat dairy products are all foods that are high in fat and should be avoided. However, even though fats should generally be avoided, fat is still needed in the diet at low levels.
- **Calories** - Calories are a measurement of energy. Weight is gained or lost, depending on the intake versus expenditure of calories. Those who need to gain weight will consume a high level of calories daily, exceeding their daily expenditure. Those losing weight will minimize caloric intake to what is a necessary level and then will burn calories with exercise.

## Interval Training For Officials

Interval training is a conditioning program that has proven to be beneficial for hockey officials. This process actually simulates game conditions where an official is skating hard for a period of time and then has a chance to rest during a stoppage of play. The basis behind interval training is timed periods of intense activities followed by a rest period that is twice as long. The advantage to interval training is that it is designed to develop faster heart rate recovery, which is necessary for maximum performance of an official.

Interval training can be accomplished both on the ice and off the ice. In on-ice interval training, the official will skate three laps around the rink, attempting to complete the laps in a predetermined amount of time that allows for a steady pace. After the three laps, the official will rest, while maintaining some motion, for twice the predetermined time. This procedure is followed several times with the participant skating both forward and backward.

Sprints are also an effective interval training tool. Skate from one end of the ice to the other, rest for twice as long, and repeat this process (6-12 times both forward and backward) by skating to the other end of the rink. Other patterns may also be used for interval training, following the same basic principles.

Off the ice, interval training can be performed by running sprints or utilizing stairmasters or life cycles. Once again, be sure to follow the basic premise of activity followed by a rest period with several repetitions.

## Physical Conditioning Review

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about physical conditioning. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

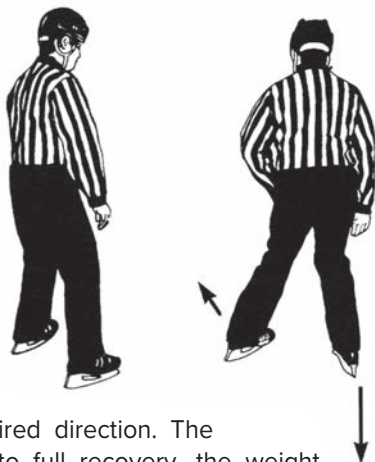
1. Describe the components of a successful conditioning program.
2. Describe some nutritional guidelines you should follow as an official. Include a discussion of fluids, carbohydrates, protein, sugars, fat and calories. Why are they important, and what are some dietary sources of each?
3.
  - a. What is interval training?
  - b. Why is it important for hockey officials?
  - c. Give some examples of interval training for both on and off the ice.

# FUNDAMENTALS OF SKATING

Skating has been determined to be the first building block of officiating, similar to that of a player. The Basic and Intermediate Manuals have provided you with some fundamental information on balance, forward stride, forward stops and starts and the backward stride. This manual will continue the skating progression. Be sure to review all of the skating information and don't forget to practice.

## Backwards Starts

The backward power start allows the official to start efficiently with good balance and full view of the play. This start can be used anytime the official desires to go in a backward direction from a stopped position. From the ready position with the knees bent, the official will turn 90 degrees (facing center ice) and thrust out with the leg farthest from the intended direction while the glide leg turns in so the heel is pointed in the desired direction. The thrusting leg returns to full recovery, the weight is transferred, and the other leg now becomes the thrusting leg. The stride is lengthened with each thrust until the normal backward stride is achieved.



### Key Elements

- Ready position
- Knee bend
- Thrust down and through ice with heel out/toe in arc
- Weight on ball of foot on glide leg
- Glide leg heel points in desired direction
- Head and chest is up

### Common Errors

- Do not turn body 90 degrees
- Lack of knee bend
- Improper weight distribution
- Failure to achieve full extension and recovery
- Bend at the waist (head down)

## Backwards Stops

There are two different backward stops utilized by officials during certain situations. Let's review both of them.

### "V" Stop

The "V" stop is used when the official is in open ice or while backwards skating to the proper position during stoppages. From this stop, the official can either move freely into the stationary ready position or can quickly

change directions by skating forward using the forward "V" start. During the back ward "V" stop, the knees are bent in the ready position and the skates move to a heel to heel position. The weight is on the inside edges on the middle of the blade. The official leans forward slightly and when stopped assumes the ready position or quickly skates forward in the other direction.



### Key Elements

- Knees bent (toe knee shoulder alignment)
- Toes out, heels in
- Weight is on inside edges and on center of blade
- Slight forward lean
- Head is up
- Ready position upon completion (or forward "V" start if desired to go in opposite direction)

### Common Errors

- Lack of knee bend
- Not turning each skate equally
- Insufficient weight on inside edges
- Leaning too far forward
- Feet too far apart / too close together

### "T" Stop

The "T" stop is used when the official is along the boards or in tight situations. This stop also allows the official to assume the ready position or change directions using the forward "T" start. This stop is similar to the previous stop, however, only one foot is used to execute the stop. From the ready position with the knees bent, turn the non glide skate to a heel to heel position (the non glide skate allows you to stop facing the center of the ice). Place your weight on the inside edge of the non glide skate and apply pressure on the middle of the blade. Slowly transfer weight to a gradual stop keeping your knee bent. Once stopped, assume the ready position or use the forward "T" start to skate in the opposite direction.



### Key Elements

- Knees bent
- Non glide skate in a heel to heel position (hip rotation 1/4 turn)
- Skates form 90 degree angle with breaking skate crossing the T.
- Transfer weight to inside edge on the center of blade
- Head up, stop facing center ice
- Assume ready position when completed (or use forward "T" start to go opposite direction)



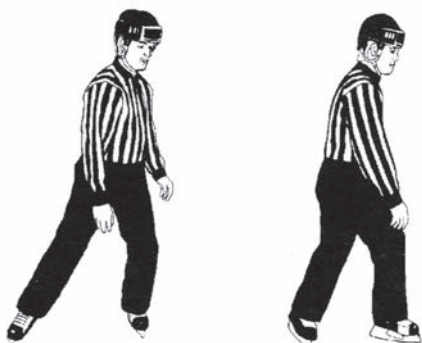
### Common Errors

- Lack of knee bend
- Non glide leg rotated too far
- Improper weight transfer
- Skates too far apart

### Crossunder Turns

Crossunder turns are used when a wider turn is appropriate as it generates more power than the control turn. The old school was to emphasize the crossover portion of this turn. However, modern skating technique puts the importance on the skate that drives underneath, hence it is called the crossunder.

To execute the forward crossunder turn from the ready position, turn the hips and shoulders (steering wheel) toward the intended direction. Your weight should be on the inside edge of your outside skate which thrusts outward (skate that is closest to the boards). Using the outside edge of your inside skate, thrust under the glide skate to full extension and transfer your weight to the crossunder skate. Recover with your outside skate (never leaving the ice) to the ready position and repeat the process. In executing the crossunder turn, you want to reach out to grab the ice and push underneath your glide leg.



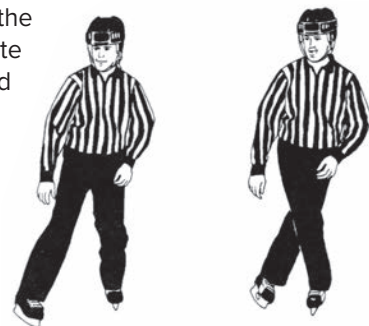
### Key Elements

- Turn of shoulders and hips in the intended direction
- Weight alternates between inside edge of outside skate and outside edge of inside skate
- Alternating full extension of the inside and outside legs during the thrust phase
- Knee bend
- Recover to ready position with outside skate never leaving the ice
- Head up

### Common Errors

- Failure to fully extend crossunder leg
- Improper knee bend
- Head down watching skates
- Failure to use hips and shoulders as a steering wheel

The backward crossunder is executed very similarly to the forward version. From the ready position with the knees bent, the initial thrust comes from the inside edge of the outside skate. The shoulders and hips are turned and the heel of the outside skate turns in to the desired direction to become the glide skate. The outside edge of the inside skate thrusts under the outside leg. Both skates then recover to the ready position.



The backwards crossunder can best be described as a scissors motion. The skates should barely leave the ice as they push ice out then pull ice in. The farther the inside skate reaches towards the center, the more thrust it will execute when crossing under.

### Key Elements

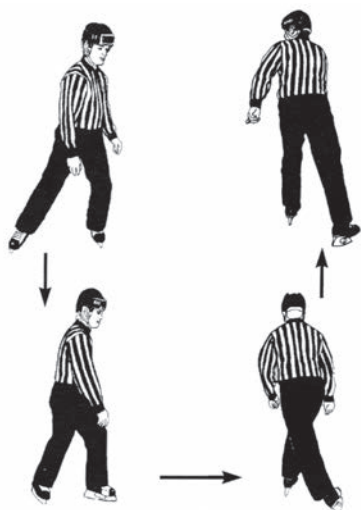
- Knee Bend
- Shoulders level and head up
- Strong thrusts to full extension from both inside and outside edges
- Efficient recovery to the ready position with skates barely leaving the ice
- Reach to center with inside skate prior to start of crossunder

### Common Errors

- Excessive leaning, shoulders not level
- Bend at the waist instead of the knees
- Failure to reach full extension and recover to ready position
- Lifting skates off of ice during recovery
- Head is down watching skates

## Control Turns

Control turns are used by officials when they are skating forward and need to change directions while play is on the opposite side of the ice. Control turns must be executed tightly and correctly in order to maintain field of vision and stay out of the way of the play. When executing a control turn, always turn towards the center of the ice.



From the ready position skating forward, bend the pivot knee (closest to the center of the ice) and thrust out with the opposite skate. Turn your shoulders first and then your hips (they serve as the steering wheel) in the direction of the turn as your weight will transfer to the outside edge of the glide skate. Crossunder and thrust with the outside edge of the glide skate which establishes momentum in the new desired direction. Continue the forward stride in the new direction.

### Key Elements

- Skates shoulder width apart
- Pivot knee has exaggerated knee bend (over the toe of the skate)
- Thrust out with non glide skate
- Turn shoulders and hips (steering wheel) in the direction of the turn
- Weight on the outside edge of the lead skate and inside edge of the trailing skate
- One crossunder to establish momentum in other direction
- Continue forward stride
- Head up, always turn towards center of ice

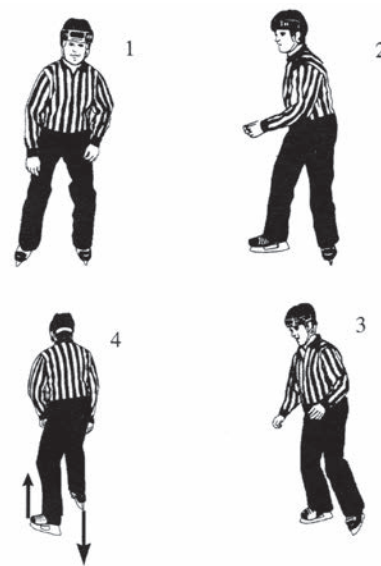
### Common Errors

- Lack of knee bend
- Failure to thrust with non glide leg
- Improper weight transfer
- Failure to crossunder and thrust with glide skate
- Head is down looking at skates

## Pivot Turns

The forward to backward pivot turn requires three steps. The turn should always be executed with the official facing center ice. From the ready position, follow these steps:

1. Weight transfers to one skate (closest to the boards)
2. Open up hip, turn in heel of opposite skate (heel to heel position) and plant heel and transfer weight
3. Rotate hips and shoulders and return other skate to backwards ready position



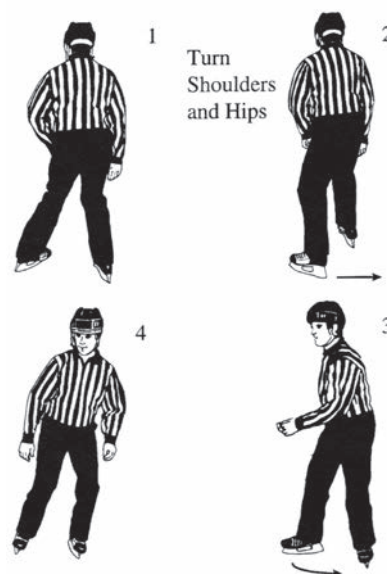
### Key Elements

- Proper weight transfer
- Turn heel of skate so toe is pointing in opposite direction
- Rotate hips and shoulders while transferring weight
- Head is up, always turning towards center ice

### Common Errors

- Not transferring weight to one skate
- Skates are too far apart
- Over, or under rotating hips and shoulders
- Head is down watching skates
- Hopping

The backward to forward pivot turn follows the same basic three step method.



## Fundamentals of Skating Review

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about the fundamentals of skating. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Describe the key elements of each of these skating skills:
  - a. Backwards starts
  - b. Backwards stops
  - c. “T” stops
  - d. Forward crossunder turns
  - e. Backward crossunder turns
  - f. Control turns
  - g. Pivot turns

# PRE-GAME DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As an upper level official, your pre-game duties and responsibilities become more defined and may present you with some difficult situations. The Basic and Intermediate Officiating Manuals carefully outlined many of the pre-game requirements that are to be met by an official. Physical conditioning, knowledge of the rules and their application, conducting pre-game meetings, and practicing risk management all require the official's attention prior to dropping the puck. At higher levels of hockey, these responsibilities are an absolute must in addition to a more sophisticated mental approach and awareness outlined in this manual.

## Mental Preparation

The proper frame of mind as you prepare for the opening face-off is a must. The Basic and Intermediate Manuals discussed the importance of physical preparation and putting yourself in the best possible position physically to minimize injury and to succeed. However, another important aspect of your preparation relies on your ability to mentally prepare yourself for success.

One area that cannot be emphasized enough is the complete and thorough understanding of the rules and their interpretation. As an experienced official working several levels of hockey, an additional problem may arise in the rules differences between leagues or governing bodies. Careful review of the governing rules for several days prior to the game will minimize confusion and error once the puck is dropped. When it comes down to crunch time during the game, the excuse that you misinterpreted a rule because you work games using several different rule books is not acceptable and is a sure fire way of making sure you may not be assigned in that league again.

Your actual mental preparation for a game should start at least one day in advance. Plan the day of the game well in advance, including your transportation to the rink and your meal schedule. Allow plenty of time to eat a good meal several hours prior to the game and be sure to allow plenty of time to get to the arena while also planning on how to address potential difficulties such as bad weather or heavy traffic. Arrange to leave work early to allow for your attention to shift focus onto the task at hand. The last few hours before a game is an important time to establish your pre-game routine, both mentally and physically, and needs your undivided attention. Working up until the last minute will not only cheat your officiating performance, but also will probably affect your ability to perform your everyday job.

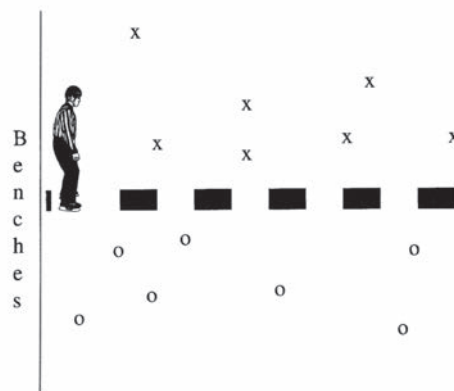
Another method of preparation used by the best officials in the world involves visual review of situations. Replay previous games in your mind and visualize key situations and how they were handled. Discuss the game at hand

with your partners or other people knowledgeable in the game. Visualize each signal and each potential infraction to help establish a standard and consistency in your calls. This visualization technique will allow you to react quickly and decisively when the situation occurs during the game. This also allows you to learn from your mistakes in prior games and eliminate situations that you are not prepared to handle proficiently.

## Warm-up Procedures

As mentioned in the Intermediate Officials Manual, the on-ice warm up provides the officials an opportunity to properly loosen up while inspecting the playing area and ice conditions for a safe environment. Your responsibilities do not end there.

Officials should always be the first participants to enter the ice surface and have the responsibility of monitoring the players. In higher levels of hockey, potential altercations sometime start for the silliest reasons as teams attempt to intimidate their opponent or seek revenge for an incident that may have occurred when the teams played previously. For this reason, the officials need to monitor the center red line to ensure that neither team is crossing over to their opponent's side of the ice. The officials should also guarantee there is an equal distribution of pucks. In many cases, a team may feel they are being slighted and will attempt to secure pucks from their opponent's side of the ice. Naturally the opponent, not willing to share, will refuse to surrender any pucks which leads to a potential altercation situation. Awareness by the officials will address these types of situations before a problem arises.



Knowledge of problems occurring during the previous games involving these teams will help prevent situations motivated by revenge. A good official is able to anticipate potential altercations and will take measures to avoid these situations. The officials must also be prepared to assess penalties for infractions occurring during the warm up period. Each league or governing body may have

their own procedure for the pre-game warm up that must be followed. Penalties may be warranted for crossing the center red line, not wearing the proper protective equipment, or failing to leave the ice immediately at the completion of the warm up period. Knowledge of the correct penalties and interpretations by the team of officials is a must.

### Starting Line ups

Some leagues require the officials to monitor the starting line ups of both teams. In these instances, the referee will be issued a line up card that lists the starting players for the visiting and home teams. Oftentimes, the starters will also be announced over the public address system prior to the start of the game. The referee, with assistance from the linespersons, will then be responsible for monitoring which players actually start the game. The linespersons, with each linesperson choosing one team, should make a mental note of the numbers of each player on the ice for the opening face-off.

| DATE: 12/19/96                       |                    |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| TEAM: HILL CITY Spartans             |                    |
| NO.                                  | NAME               |
| 30                                   | JOHN HAGANSON "G"  |
| 3                                    | BOBBY SCHAEFER "D" |
| 16                                   | THOMAS ANDREWS "D" |
| 19                                   | GREG JOHNSON "W"   |
| 10                                   | BILL CURTIS "G"    |
| 21                                   | CHUCK ALLEN "W"    |
| 8                                    | GORDY PATE         |
| 15                                   | MIKE MCENARIE      |
| 4                                    | MARK SCHNEIDER     |
| 7                                    | CHARLIE SWANSON    |
| 9                                    | PETE KERRIGAN      |
| 12                                   | JOHN BLUMH         |
| 14                                   | PAUL JOHNSON       |
| 17                                   | GREG FALLOON       |
| 11                                   | BOB MEYER          |
| 20                                   | REGGIE WILLIAMS    |
| 5                                    | JOHN SOROKIN       |
| 1                                    | BRIAN TALBOTT      |
| Coach's Signature: <i>John Kelly</i> |                    |
| COACH'S SIGNATURE                    |                    |

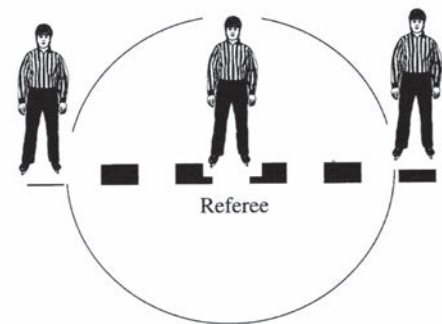
If a player starts the game who is not listed as a starter, the opponent can challenge this situation in an attempt to gain a power play up until the conducting of the next face-off. In this situation, it is a must that the officials have monitored the players on the ice in order to correctly determine whether an infraction has occurred. Officials who have not been aware will only be able to guess as to the validity of the challenge. Once the challenge has occurred, the referee should consult with the linespersons to cross reference the actual starting players to what was listed in the line up. Not handling this situation correctly will start the game off on the wrong skate and will provide an opportunity for both teams to question the competency of the officiating team.

### National Anthem Procedures

The playing of the national anthem provides an opportunity for the officials to portray a professional image. A sharp-looking officiating team will not only show respect for the countries involved with the game, but will also gain credibility as officials who take pride in their work. Here are some key points that need to be followed during the playing of national anthems:

- Remove your helmet and place it in the penalty bench area or hold it right side up at your side.

- The officials should stand facing the flag at center ice. The referee should stand on the center ice face-off spot while the linespersons should stand on the center red line at the point where it intersects the face-off circle. In situations where the flag is above you at center ice, the officials may choose to stand in the referee's crease with the referee in the center.
- The officials should always remain still during the entire anthem and remain standing in the proper location until the anthem is completely finished. Nothing looks worse than when the players are constantly moving and start skating prior to the completion of the anthem. Remember, officials are expected to maintain a higher standard of professionalism.



### Pre-Game Duties and Responsibilities Review

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about pre-game duties and responsibilities. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. What are some of the important things that should be included in your mental preparation?
2. What does the warm-up procedure for an official entail?
3. What are some things to consider when considering starting line-ups?
4. When the National Anthem is played, where do the officials stand? What should their posture be?



# CONDUCTING FACE-OFFS

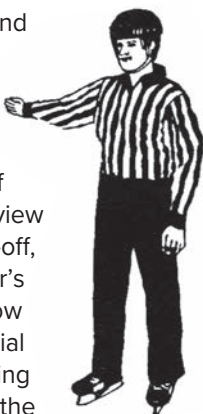
*General face-off procedures have been covered extensively in the Basic and Intermediate Manuals. Please review those publications prior to reading the material covered in this manual.*

## Calling Encroachment

Encroachment takes place when players violate the face-off circles and other markings that are designed to restrain the players prior to the drop of the puck. For face-offs that take place at locations other than the five face-off circles, players must maintain a reasonable position.

Encroachment is called when a player's skate enters the face-off circle, crosses the hash mark, or when they make any physical contact with an opponent before the puck is dropped. Physical contact includes contact made by a player's body or stick.

If encroachment takes place behind the official handling the face-off, their partner (who has a view of those players) blows their whistle and points toward the offending player's defensive end of the ice. If encroachment takes place within the view of the official conducting the face-off, they point toward the offending player's end. There is no need for them to blow their whistle. In either case, the official conducting the face-off handles ejecting the center of the offending team in the manner previously described.



Encroachment takes place only after players are in position for the face-off. If a player is lined up improperly, the official conducting the face-off should give the player verbal instruction. If players begin "creeping in" the face-off circle, or jockeying for position before the puck is dropped, the official should verbally order those players into position while maintaining the proper face-off stance. They should not use hand or body gestures to accomplish this.



There are some players that the official conducting the face-off cannot see from their stance position. The official who is not conducting the face-off must make sure that those players are in their proper positions. If they notice they are not in their proper position, they must blow their whistle to alert their partner who is ready to conduct the face-off.

If a player does not cooperate when instructed to get into position, the center of the offending team should be ejected. Repeated encroachment on the same face-off by the same player or team calls for a minor penalty for delay of game under rule 613.

**Note:** Officials should consider the age level of the players. An official can be extremely helpful in instructing players on proper face-off behavior for very low level games. Children at the 8U age classification and lower are especially willing learners and responsive to an official's instructions.

## Special Face-Off Situations

There are several situations during a game when face-offs become critical. These include power plays, those taking place in the last moments of a close game, and those which take place when there is a change in the momentum of the game. At these times the official must be sure of their actions to see that the face-off is conducted fairly. They should try to keep the centers in the face-off as much as possible without widely diverting from their standard. Common sense suggests a few extra seconds added to the five second face-off procedure would also be practiced to ensure a fair and successful face-off. In other words, a little more instruction or patience will help the official and the players.

During critical face-offs, the official should also be aware of the "false face-off," meaning that when the puck is dropped, it accidentally hits a player's stick. Play should be stopped and another face-off should take place. No time should expire since the play did not officially begin. There is no ejection under this circumstance. However, when the puck is dropped and one of the centers hits it out of the air (before the puck contacts the ice), play should be allowed to continue.

## Taking Pride In Face-Offs

An experienced official has the luxury of working on the finer aspects of the game because many fundamentals are mastered, including positioning and mechanics. Since face-offs happen frequently and turn attention toward them, the experienced official can work on making every face-off crucial. This is especially true in the case of a linesperson, where face-offs are a primary duty, often conducted dozens of times during a game.

An official needs to take charge of each face-off, instructing the players, and not allowing the players to run the official. Mediocrity should not be tolerated, and concentration and hard work result in well conducted face-offs. The official should work on being consistent with their partner in how face-offs are conducted. They should discuss face-off standards prior to the game. The result will be an increase in each official's awareness and confidence while watching each other conduct each face-off with consistency and pride.

### **Preventative Maintenance**

Managing each facet of a game is similar to running a machine. A good operator knows the importance of preventive maintenance. When a machine breaks down, it is always at the worst time, compounding problems for the operator. By taking care of their machine, there is a better chance it will run smoothly and produce a good product.

The official can operate in the same way. If they make a mental notation of known problem players prior to the game, the official can set expectations on face-offs early in the game. If problems arise with a specific player during the game, the official should alert their partner to the player and the problem so they are prepared for their next encounter.

With problem players it is necessary to pay them special attention. The official needs to work harder to get them to comply. This is done by giving them a private, verbal warning prior to a face-off after observing one they had unfairly won. An official cannot allow a player to continue to win face-offs unfairly. If there is trouble getting a problem player to comply, discuss the situation with the team captain, and in extreme cases after difficult periods of absolute noncompliance, talk to the coach.

The most respected attribute an official possesses is consistency. Each face-off is an opportunity to showcase their consistency.

## **Conducting Face-Offs Review**

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about conducting face-offs. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.







**The following questions refer to the 3-official system.**

1. During a face-off, who is responsible for observing the players behind the official dropping the puck?
2. What is the procedure for calling face-off encroachment?
3. Identify 3 critical face-off situations and describe how the officials should handle these situations.

## LEGEND

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Here is a brief description of symbols used in the USA Hockey Officiating Manual Series.

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
|    | <b>FORWARD SKATING</b>        |
|    | <b>BACKWARD SKATING</b>       |
|    | <b>DIRECTION OF THE PLAY</b>  |
|    | <b>PUCK IS PASSED OR SHOT</b> |
| <b>“x” and “o”</b>  | <b>OPPOSING PLAYERS</b>       |
|  | <b>REFERENCE POINTS</b>       |
|  | <b>AREA BEING DESCRIBED</b>   |

NOTE: The “o” player is always defending the goal at the bottom of the diagram. The “x” player is attacking the goal at the bottom of the diagram.

## POSITIONING

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Although positioning guidelines may be more flexible at the highest levels of hockey, the use of basic positioning techniques are still necessary for officiating success. The emphasis at the highest levels of officiating often changes to making the right call, no matter how it is accomplished. However, your chances of making the proper call increase dramatically when you are in the proper position. The most successful officials are those who have mastered the

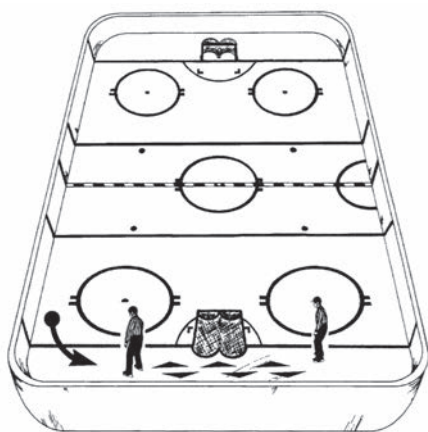
basics of all aspects of officiating, positioning included. Prior to continuing the study of this manual, review the positioning procedures outlined in the Basic and Intermediate Manuals. This ongoing review will help ensure you minimize the instances where the procedures described in this manual have to be used. Avoiding these situations will make you a stronger official.

## POSITIONING REFEREE (Three-Official System)

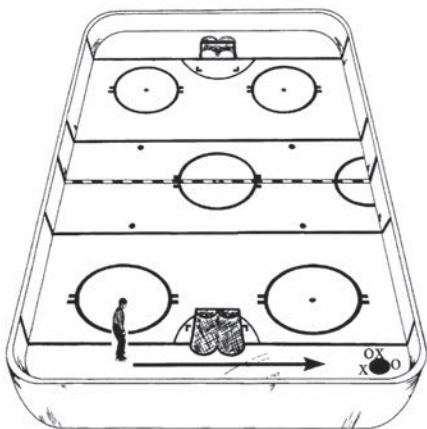
### Going Behind The Goal (When And How)

The “no man’s land” described in the Basic Manual still applies to all officials in all avoidable situations. Even though there may be times when a referee simply cannot avoid having to go behind the net, these instances should only be under extreme circumstances and may only occur once or twice an entire season. Referees who find themselves constantly skating behind the net during play are not anticipating the play effectively or are simply too lazy to hustle to the proper position.

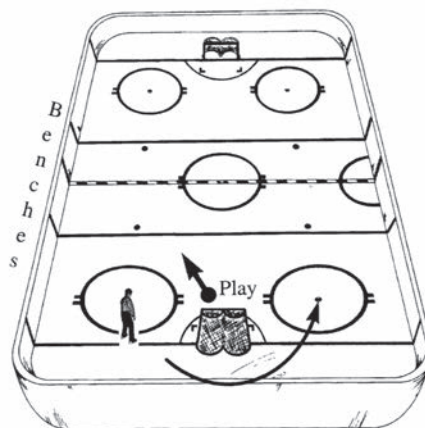
One situation where a referee may have no alternative is when players are jamming the end boards and the referee is trapped by the goal. In this instance, the referee should quickly skate backwards to the other side while still facing the play.



A referee may choose to skate behind the goal during play to verbalize to players who have the puck stalled along the far boards. In this case, the referee must move quickly as to not get caught behind the net as the puck is jarred loose and ends up in the slot area. The referee should verbalize while moving forward quickly towards the stalled players.



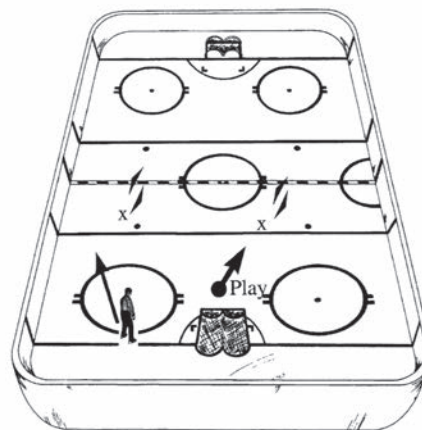
Finally, a referee may choose to skate behind the goal to avoid having to skate in front of the players’ benches during line changes. During a game with few stoppages, the referee may get caught on the same side of the ice as the benches. Every time the referee skates through the neutral zone, teams will be changing lines and creating traffic that is difficult for the referee to fight through and maintain proper positioning. This procedure should be followed only in extreme cases as it may give the appearance that the referee is running away from the benches if used too often.



### Goal Line Determination On When To Leave The Line

A successful official will maintain an excellent field of vision and conserve energy by properly managing their time spent in the end zones. Inexperienced officials will oftentimes move excessively around the goal line as the puck goes out to the point or the defending teams gains possession. The following hints will help you better read the play and determine when to leave the goal line:

- Watch the flow of the play and not the puck. Officials who focus on the puck will constantly be moving based on the movement of the puck. This focus on the puck also promotes tunnel vision.

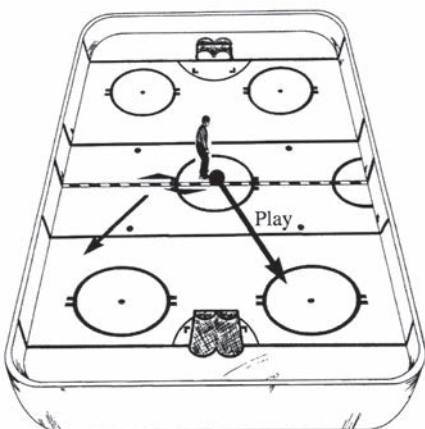
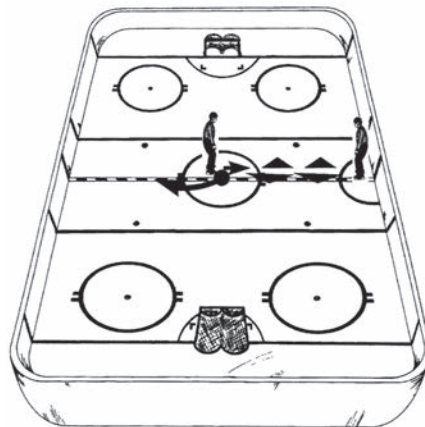


- Monitor possession of the puck and the intent of the player to look up ice.
- Key on the attacking defensemen. When they retreat, they are giving up the zone and play will leave the zone. At this time, the referee should release the goal line position. If the attacking defensemen hold the blue line, play will more likely stay in the zone or stall along the boards and your position on the goal line should be maintained.
- Don't over-anticipate the play. You should feel confident enough in your skating ability to be patient and wait to move until you are sure the puck is leaving the zone. A strong official will be able to catch up to the play as it moves through the neutral zone.

### Backing Out Of A Center Ice Face-Off (Situational)

After conducting a center ice face-off, the referee needs to be patient while viewing the play. Once the direction of the play is determined, the referee then must move according to movement of the play. The referee should skate forward when play moves quickly in one direction or the other in order to continue facing the play.

Play that stays in the center of the ice will allow the referee to follow the normal procedure of skating backwards to the side boards. The referee may turn and skate backwards in the opposite direction when the play stalls directly behind them and they have no other options.





# POSITIONING REFEREE (Two-Official System)

The two official system is more difficult to work than the three official system for most officials. The two official system requires both officials to handle all on-ice responsibilities, often compromising their ability to call penalties or off-sides infractions. This added aspect of the two official system means teamwork and basic officiating skills are an absolute must for success. Although the two official system is adequate for lower levels of hockey, the USA Hockey Officiating Program strongly recommends the three official system for higher levels.

This section will address the two most difficult aspects of positioning regarding the two official system. As in other chapters, this does not excuse the official from having a thorough and complete understanding of the basics of the two official system which are outlined in the Basic and Intermediate Manuals. Please review those publications in concert with your review of this manual.

## Reading The Play At The Blue Line (When Play Leaves The Zone)

Officials must strive for blue line coverage at all times and should only have one official in position to make each blue line call. Effective communication, use of the release signal, repeated eye contact, and reading your partner's movements are all valuable tools used by successful officials.

The official who is attending the blue line as play is about to leave the end zone must practice patience and hold the line as long as possible. In the ideal situation, this official does not leave the blue line position until released by the deep official or absolutely sure the play will enter the other end zone. The ability to wait until the last minute will result in more complete blue line coverage, but also takes a lot of practice and experience. Review the following tips on key areas in order to anticipate the movement of the puck from zone to zone:

### Signs That Play Is Staying In End Zone

- Defensemen hold at blue line
- Puck is carried along boards
- Wingers are out too high for breakout pass

### Signs That Play Is Leaving End Zone

- Defensemen retreat from zone
- Puck is skated up the middle of ice
- Long completed pass near blue line

### Signs That Play Is Reversing Back Into End Zone

- Team uses one player forecheck, stacking the neutral zone
- Player loses possession of puck
- Puck does not cross center red line for dump and chase without icing

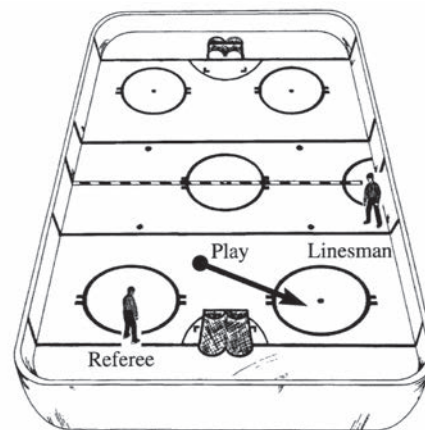
## Signs That Play Will Travel Completely Through Neutral Zone

- Offensive team changes to a defensive mode
- Team appears willing to give up neutral zone
- Player with puck has teammates in good position to receive pass

The official deep in the zone must also anticipate the play and should monitor the same situations in order to not give up the goal line position unnecessarily but to also hustle to get to the blue line when play does leave the zone. Once at the blue line, the deep official can maintain the blue line position until the puck enters the far end zone.

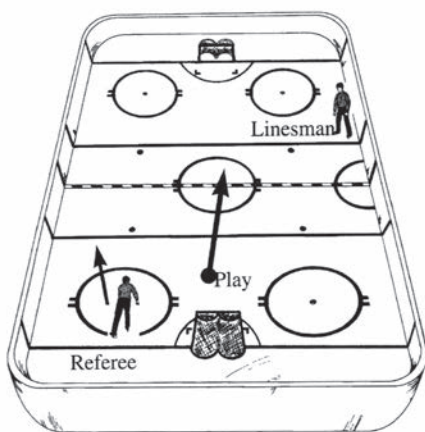
## Penalty Assessment (Who Calls What And When)

The most successful two official system officiating teams tend to have a lot of experience working together and perform as if they were working the three official system. This thought process allows for more consistency in penalty selection and a more positive team atmosphere. In this scenario, the deep official thinks as a "referee" and is responsible for calling penalty infractions that occur in the zone while the partner on the blue line thinks like a "linesperson." This thought process will continue until play moves to the other end or the officials change responsibilities. Depending on the position of the play, one official will think "linesperson" and one official will think "referee," but never both at the same time.

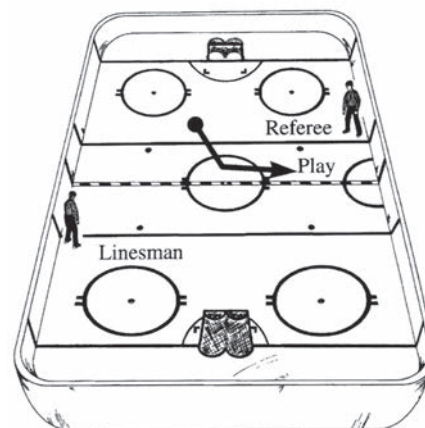


When play is in an end zone, the official on the goal line will be responsible for goals and penalties. In doing this, a field of vision that is the same as a "referee" in the three official system is established. The official on the blue line will perform as a "linesperson," responsible for line calls, major penalties and flagrant missed minor penalties. Otherwise, the deep official will handle the entire zone.

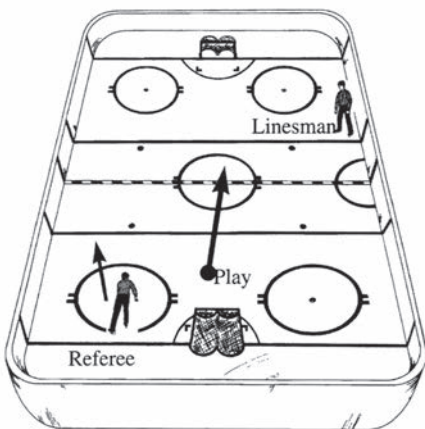
After play leaves the end zone, the deep official will still think as the “referee,” similar to the three official system, while following play out of the zone. The one exception is the back official will need to be involved as the back official for potential icing infractions. The official originally on the blue line will continue the duties of the linesperson, serving as the front official for icing and backward skating to assume the potential off-sides call at the blue line.



The one exception to this thinking process may occur when play stalls in the neutral zone. In this scenario, both officials will be positioned diagonally across from each other on opposite blue lines. The official who trailed the play out of the end zone should maintain the referee frame of mind until play enters the other end zone or the play shifts back and requires a call on the blue line. The latter situation will require the thought process to change only momentarily for both officials while play enters the zone.



When the puck crosses the blue line to enter the other end zone, the official on the blue line now changes to being the referee and follows play into the zone. The field of vision and thinking is now that of a referee in the three official system. The trailing official also changes their thinking to now become the linesperson moving up to the blue line to make the line calls, call major penalties, or flagrant missed minor penalties.



## Positioning Review

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about positioning. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

**The following questions refer to the 3-official system.**

1. Under what circumstances may it be acceptable for a Referee to skate behind the goal?
2. How often should a Referee skate behind the goal?
3. What “hints” should a Referee use to determine when to leave the goal line?
4. Describe procedures a Referee should use to back out of a center ice face-off.

**Questions 5 - 6 refer to the officials in the 2-official system:**

5. What “hints” can an official use to determine when to leave the blue line as the back official (the official covering the blue line) as play develops?
6. In terms of penalty assessment, who generally calls what and when in the two-official system?

# ASSESSING PENALTIES AND OTHER INFRACTIONS

Higher levels of hockey may require an official to slightly modify the standard procedures for assessing infractions. The intensity and flow of the game may dictate that an official should become more aggressive with both physical signals and verbalization. Other times the official may be more passive when assessing infractions in order to avoid antagonizing the players. Although an advanced level official may adjust their style of penalty assessment, the main premise is still the same fundamental theory covered in the Basic and Intermediate Level Manuals. A thorough review of those publications is a must prior to proceeding onto the concepts discussed in this manual.

## Aggressive Versus Passive Penalty Assessment

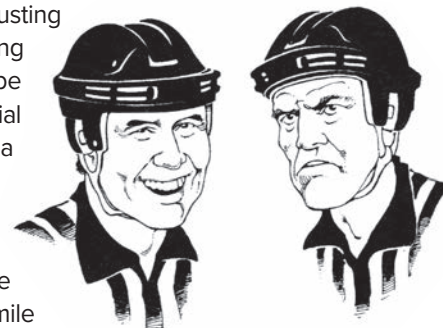
Advanced officials must be able to adjust to the flow of the game when working higher levels of hockey. The players and coaches have a better understanding of the game and react according to the actions of the officials. An official who is monotone and robotic will often times be left behind by the game participants in an intensely contested game. Each game is different in intensity and requires a different approach from the officials. In some cases, an official's approach may even need to change in the middle of a game as the game takes on a different look. A good official will go with the flow and follow the tips presented in this section.

The signals may be the most obvious change visible to the players and spectators. An official may need to be more aggressive with the penalty signals during a game that is hard fought and requires much control by the official. A more aggressive signal will notify the players that you are in control and you may not be particularly pleased with their actions. In contrast, a game that is relatively quiet will require the official to be more passive in signaling. A more deliberate signal that does not draw unnecessary attention to the offending player is all that is needed in a passive game. Being able to recognize the characteristics of the game and participants is important for an official to be able to respond accordingly. Mismatching the officiating style with the style of the game could create animosity with the players and make your job as an official more difficult.

The verbalization of the penalty is also an important area for officials to adjust accordingly, even though a difference may only be noticed by the players on the ice. A good official will alter voice intonation according to the proximity of the play. When near the play, the official should be softer in order to not intimidate the players. When play is stopped with the official farther away from the players, the official needs to be louder and slightly more aggressive to effectively communicate the infraction. In some cases where a routine situation has occurred, the official may choose not to verbalize at all as the players are already aware of what has been called. Once again, the inability of the official to adjust according to the situation will lessen the official's credibility

and destroy the positive rapport that had been established with the players.

Finally, you may recall the Basic and Intermediate Level Manuals call for the officials to maintain their cool at all times and perform only in a businesslike manner. This still holds true, although the most successful officials are able to establish a strong rapport with the participants by adjusting their demeanor according to the game. This can be done by controlling facial expressions. During a quiet, passive game, the good official may remain looser and be more friendly to the game participants. A smile on occasion may indicate that you are enjoying the game and



have fun being an official. On the other hand, a more feisty game will call for the official to maintain control by being more aggressive and businesslike. An experienced official will also recognize the time where it may be appropriate to show anger in order to help maintain the control of the game and send a message to the players that a particular action will not be tolerated. The key to success for an official is the ability to tailor expressions to suit the game while always maintaining control of emotions

## Calling In Front Of Your Partner (Two-Official System)

A complaint often heard regarding the two official system is a lack of consistency between partners or the official who is 65 feet away called infractions that were 10 feet in front of the other official. Although it is important that all penalty infractions be called, there is a certain etiquette that needs to be followed for a two official team to be successful. Your partner, who is closer to the play and is in the proper position, may have seen something different than what you saw from a greater distance or simply may have interpreted the situation differently. As the back official, it is better to allow your closer partner to make the call unless you are absolutely positive your partner did not see the infraction.

An official who constantly calls infractions in front of their partner appears to be overzealous and lacks confidence in their partner. This situation may create animosity with the game participants and definitely puts the credibility of both officials in jeopardy.

In the case of a frozen puck, stopping the play shall always be the sole responsibility of the closest official (or the referee in the three official system). This official will have the best

possible view of the play and can easily determine when it is necessary to stop play.

Communication between the officials is critical to the success of the officiating team. Prior to the game, the officials should discuss procedures and philosophies in order to handle situations that may occur on the ice smoothly. It is important to agree on all issues before taking the ice to avoid misunderstandings once the game begins. The pre game meeting provides an excellent opportunity for the officials to establish a strong working relationship that will transfer to the ice.

As with the linespersons in the three official system, eye contact during play will be a valuable tool to successfully work together. When your partner is unsure or did not see a particular incident, a good official will be able to monitor your partner's facial expression or eye contact in order to determine whether it is necessary to make the call. During stoppages, an effective team will briefly discuss situations as they occur and will take the necessary time to iron out a correct response, without drastically delaying the game.

When working the two official system with a new official, the experienced official needs to allow the new official to gain experience making calls. However, a new official may be hesitant to call infractions at first, which may call for the experienced official to take control when necessary. It is important that this is done in a quiet and diplomatic way as to not undermine the credibility and confidence of the new official. Reviewing the incidents during a stoppage or in between periods will help the new official establish a feel for the game and gain confidence. Be sure to support the new official when a good call is made as this will promote a positive atmosphere of learning.

Good two official teams may differ in philosophies between the pair, but they tend to reach a happy medium that has the best interest of the game in mind. An official may be asked to compromise in the spirit of cooperation and should always support the decisions of their partner. As soon as the officials question the calls of their partners, the players, coaches and spectators will follow suit creating a less than positive officiating environment.

### **Overruling A Linesperson (Three Official System)**

Teamwork is also an important contributor to the success of a three official team. Even though the referee and linespersons have different responsibilities, they are all still on the same level and the team will only be as strong as the weak link. Procedures and mechanics should be discussed during the pregame meeting and doing so will eliminate sloppy work once on the ice. All three members of the team should communicate often, both during the play and stoppages. A well timed "heads up behind," while the referee is skating by, from the linesperson may alert the

referee of an incident that may be occurring behind the play. The referee may communicate to the linesperson while waiting for a face-off to pay particular attention to two players on the ice during stoppages who have been on the edge all night long. Officials who work together in helping each other are ultimately going to look better as a team.

The old school portrays the referee as being superior and must have complete control of the game, including the linespersons' responsibilities. USA Hockey has come a long way in changing this mind set worldwide. Most referees and officiating leaders recognize the importance of the linespersons and their ability to control the tempo of the game while properly conducting face-offs. The referee who allows the linespersons to carry out their duties effectively will have one less thing to worry about and will maintain the integrity of the officiating team.

There may be situations where the referee may need to overrule a linesperson on an off-side or error in the calling of an icing. In these instances, the referee should be sure not to overrule unless absolutely positive an error has been made or the linesperson has been screened from seeing the play or knocked out of position. A good rule of thumb is when the linesperson signals, it is a good sign that the play was viewed by the linesperson and the referee should allow play to continue. A referee who continually overrules a linesperson tends to isolate the linesperson as being incompetent and will have a difficult time generating support and cooperation from the linespersons when needed.

The key to a three official team may be the development of a mutual respect among all of the partners. A good official will accept assistance from a partner when necessary, and will accept blame for their own mistakes. An officiating team will respect each partner's judgment and support their actions. When assistance is required, help will be conducted in a diplomatic way to be sure not to undermine the credibility, integrity, or confidence of the partner. Effective communication and teamwork will carry an officiating team to the highest levels of success.

### **Using Appropriate Reaction Time**

An advanced level official will recognize a reaction to an infraction does not always have to be immediate. For example, in the case of a restraining infraction, an experienced official will wait for the final outcome of the play and analyze the degree of the infraction. A common mistake is to immediately react to a potential hooking infraction by signaling a delayed whistle. This could result in a weak penalty being called as the puck may proceed directly to a teammate, not causing a change of possession. A delayed reaction will help the official see the entire play and base the decision on all of the circumstances.



In contrast, it is important to react quickly and decisively to violent infractions. An experienced official will anticipate big hits so they may be seen from start to finish. An immediate reaction not only helps to sell the call, but also alerts the non-offending team that a penalty is being called and retaliation is not necessary. The referee may also verbalize “I got it” in these situations to avoid unnecessary altercations. Once the

official has responded to a violent infraction, the time used to skate to the penalty bench can now be used to determine whether a major or minor penalty should result. In cases where an injury occurs calling for a major penalty, the referee may choose to check on the injured player prior to making the appropriate decision.

### **Assessing Penalties and Other Infractions Review**

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about assessing penalties and other infractions. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Discuss aggressive versus passive penalty assessment.
2. Discuss some guidelines for making calls in front of/overruling/helping your partner(s):
  - a. In the two-official system
  - b. In the three-official system
3. Describe how reaction time is important when calling:
  - a. Restraining infractions
  - b. Violent infractions

# JUDGMENT

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## Reviewing Judgment

Before proceeding on to some advanced aspects of judgment, it is important to review what we have learned in the Basic and Intermediate Level Manuals. The following are some of the more simple concepts:

- Officials are “teachers” at the lower levels of hockey (8U and 10U).
- Officials serve a dual role as “teachers” and “game managers” at some higher levels of hockey (12U through 16 & Over).
- At the highest levels of hockey, an official’s role is one of a “game manager.” Game managers can be defined as managing the progress of the game in a safe and fair environment while using good judgment.
- Officials need to have a reactive role in the game regarding the calling of penalties. Good officials are always aware of what might happen but only react to what actually happens.
- Top officials have complete knowledge and are extremely proficient in the playing rules, the intent of each rule, the playing rule interpretations and the penalty guidelines.
- Consistency is defined as the ability to make the same judgment call in the same situation from official to official and individually from game to game.

## Penalty Criteria

The four criteria for the calling of an infraction are listed below. These infractions are referred to as “black and white” penalties that must be called every time they occur.

1. An infraction which causes a loss of a scoring opportunity
2. An infraction that creates a potential for injury
3. An infraction that is blatantly obvious
4. An infraction which causes an immediate change of possession or advantage gained

Some examples of how a penalty fits into one of these criteria follows:

- Stick contact to the head of an opponent → #2
- Shoot the puck out of rink during a stoppage → #3
- Check delivered to the head of an opponent → #2
- Checking from behind → #2
- Hooked opponent driving to the goal → #1
- Hooked opponent in the neutral zone → #4

The following pages contain some higher level officiating concepts and philosophies that may not be applicable to the Youth levels of the game. Nonetheless, USA Hockey feels it is important to present this material for consideration and understanding by our more experienced officials. Whereas most officials will consider some of these principles, USA Hockey would recommend a more simplistic approach to the vast majority of our officials.

It is widely recognized that all officials should minimize marginal penalties. At the youth levels of the game,

doing so is a result of officials simplifying their thought process. The best youth hockey officials generally take the approach that if the action by the player is an infraction that fits within four basic penalty criteria, it is a penalty. If not, then it is not a penalty and play is allowed to continue. This simple approach will also allow an official to establish consistency within their own officiating.

Review the following material with an open mind in an attempt to better understand game management philosophies at the highest levels. But in doing so, also keep the values and principles of the USA Hockey programs in mind. The end result should be a better understanding of the game as it applies to the levels you work.

## Marginal Infractions

Marginal infractions are those that are also known as the gray area. These infractions do not meet the above mentioned penalty criteria. The vast majority of the time, they simply are not penalties according to the enforcement standard. In the past, some infractions called now may have been considered marginal penalties.

The old school train of thought suggests an official who calls every situation strictly by the letter of the rules will be extremely unpopular. The game will have numerous unnecessary stoppages that will add to the frustration of the players. Spectators will also become frustrated by the length of the game and lack of continuous action. In this case, no one really wins, except for the game, which will allow for more speed and skill once players adjust to the changes in attitude and accepted standard of play.

On the other side of the coin, an official who refuses to call infractions when they occur will also run into considerable trouble. This official often jeopardizes the safety of the players and could affect the actual outcome of the game. Although the spectators may be attracted to the rough and tumble continuous action, the players and coaches view this official as being lazy and not caring about a quality performance.

The fine line between these two examples is where game management fits in. The game manager promotes a continuous flow to the game without compromising the safety or fair play respected high level officials throughout the world may apply of either team. The successful game manager calls every infraction that falls under the four criteria for a penalty.

A successful high level coach once said; “There are probably only five calls that a referee has to make in every game to successfully officiate, and this could include a no call. The difference between a good referee and a great referee is the great referee will not only accurately make those five calls in every game, but will also be able to

recognize which situations were the five critical calls for each game.”

An example of this is a situation where the game is going along quite smoothly with very little physical play. All of a sudden a player is injured as a result of a high stick from an opponent and the referee or linespersons do not see the infraction and no call is made. The team who has the injured player now starts to pick up the physical play in retaliation and every stoppage has the potential for an altercation. If the referee had made the correct call on the high stick, the game probably would have continued to be uneventful. Although every critical call may not be as clear cut as this example, the official who can recognize those situations, which may change the tone of the game, will ultimately be the most successful.

Some other things to consider include:

- **The standards previously set by the official** – Once an official has developed a penalty standard early in the game, the players will most likely adjust their style of play to play within the established standard. This becomes even more critical when a loose standard is set by the official. We all have experienced how difficult it is to tighten a standard that has already been established. Often times, more problems are created when this is attempted. With this in mind, the official who has let them play over the first two periods will have a difficult time managing a physical and lopsided game in the third period. This provides credence to the concept that it is better to set a tight standard and loosen up as the game progresses than to attempt to tighten a loose standard. Remember, consistency is based on your ability to call the same infractions in the same situations within a game and also from game to game. Establishing a tight standard at the start of every game and loosening up as the game allows is still establishing consistency that will be acknowledged and respected by the players and coaches.
- **The teams involved in the games** (two top teams or the first place team against last place team) – Although an official never wants to contribute to the outcome of the game, this becomes even more critical when an entire season and first place finish is on the line. An experienced official will allow the top two teams playing each other to dictate the course of the game.

In many ways, the philosophy of officiating has changed, which will help change attitudes of what is socially acceptable. Infractions that occur within the enforcement standard should be called at all times, regardless of score, time, location, teams involved or the “marble theory”.

Although no official wants to adversely affect the outcome of the game, it is important to recognize that failing to call a penalty does affect the outcome by denying a team the right to a power play they have earned.

Even though hockey has experienced some growing pains as attitudes change, the end result is a more enjoyable game for all participants.

### Calling A Good First Penalty

In most games, the most important call a referee has to make is the first penalty of the game. The first penalty call sends a message to all of the game participants and spectators while establishing a penalty standard the official is going to adhere to for the remainder of the game. This standard communicates what actions the official will not allow in addition to those actions which have previously happened in the game which will be allowed by the officials.

It is imperative that the first penalty of the game meets one of the four penalty criteria discussed previously. The best first penalty for the official to establish a standard is generally one that fits under the injury potential criteria. In this case, a message is sent early that rough play is not tolerated and the safety of the participants will be of utmost importance. An injury potential first penalty also sends a message that retaliation by the non offending team will not be necessary because the official is establishing good control of the game.

The unfortunate thing for the official is the first infraction committed during a game is not always an injury potential infraction. When this is the case, the official must still call the infraction and not wait for the perfect first penalty to come along. The official may still get an opportunity to make a good injury potential statement at a later point in the game. Setting a good early standard for restraining fouls is equally as important.

Officials should make an effort to not call a marginal penalty (one that does not fit the penalty criteria) as the first penalty of a game. Once the call has been made, the official has established a standard that must be adhered to. One problem that often arises when a marginal penalty is the first call is there may be a perception by the players and spectators that something more severe had occurred earlier and had not been called. This creates a problem with credibility for the official as a confusing message is sent regarding the standard that has been established. This would also be the case when a severe penalty (possibly a major) is assessed after a few other “good” prior penalties had not been assessed.

In some cases, a good official will recognize that the first penalty of a specific period may also be extremely important. This is especially true when an official has established a pretty loose standard during previous periods. The first penalty called for the next period will also become very important in this case. If a marginal penalty is called as the first infraction, a very confusing message is sent to everyone involved in the game and the officials will have to work hard to get back to a consistent standard.

## Degree Of Intent

We have already broken down infractions into “black and white” or marginal penalties. Penalties can also be broken down further and categorized as “aggressive fouls” or “restraining fouls.” Aggressive fouls are those which will most likely fall under the injury potential criteria. These infractions have little purpose in the scheme of the game except to injure or intimidate an opponent and will always be a black and white penalty. The only gray area for the official involved with aggressive fouls may be the decision to assess a minor or more severe penalty. Examples of some aggressive fouls include: slashing, high sticking, cross checking and checking from behind.

Restraining fouls are less serious in nature and may actually serve some purpose in the game. For example, an attacking player who has a clear path to the net may be hooked or held by the defending player to take away an excellent scoring opportunity. In the case where a penalty shot will not be assessed, this may be perceived to be a good penalty and may have saved a goal. Some examples of restraining fouls are: hooking, holding and tripping.

The first restraining penalty call during the course of the game will also be an important call by the official. As with the first call of the game, a good first restraining foul will help set the tone for acceptable play. An official that sets a tight standard on restraining fouls early in the game will help avoid frustration by the players and can always loosen the standard as the game progresses. However, a loose standard on restraining fouls will often lead to chippy or rough play as players become frustrated with constantly being held and retaliate with aggressive fouls. It is extremely difficult for an official to tighten a loose standard on restraining fouls once the standard has been established.

## Maintaining An Effective Standard

The easy part of an official's job is to establish a penalty standard. Often times, the most difficult thing for an inexperienced official is to maintain that standard throughout the contest. Each subsequent infraction that is called reinforces the first call made in the game and the last call made by the official. This puts a lot of pressure on the official to maintain focus throughout the game and leaves very little room for error. There is an old adage that says “you're only as good as your last call” and there may be some merit to this saying as officials constantly struggle to maintain an effective standard. For example, for an official who suddenly makes a weak call midway through the second period, some doubt or questions regarding the competency of the official may come into play by the game participants. However, if the next call made is a good call, the doubt is erased and play continues normally.

As mentioned several times earlier, officials should start the game with a fairly strong standard and maintain the standard as the game dictates. This allows the players, not the officials, to dictate the standard and the flow of the game. A loose standard established at the beginning of the game can cause difficulties for the players and could ruin a potentially good game. An experienced official will recognize how much easier it is to loosen a tight standard and allow the game to get into a good rhythm than it is to try to gain control of a game where the official is the cause of the problem for failing to call penalties.

## Consistency

As an experienced official, you should understand the concept of consistency which was discussed in the Intermediate Manual. We can now take the definition of consistency one step further and become even more specific.

***Consistency: the ability to penalize, on a regular basis, those infractions that meet one of the four penalty criteria.***

Consistency is then judged by players, coaches and spectators under the following headlines:

### 1. Situation

- Calling a similar situation the same within the same game.
- Calling similar situations in similar games the same way.

### 2. Officials

- Within the same game by one official
- Within the same game from official to official
- From game to game by the same official
- From game to game by different officials

As you can see, there are several factors that will measure the overall consistency of all officials. Of course, our goals are to become as consistent as humanly possible throughout USA Hockey. The Intermediate Manual points out just how difficult establishing consistency throughout all of our officials would be.

The USA Hockey Officiating Program is making a strong effort to promote consistency among our officials. The Official Playing Rules, Playing Rules Handbook, Officiating Manuals, Seminar Program, Evaluation Program, Publications, and Educational Videos all play a major role in the effort to improve the consistency among all registered officials.

However, the individual official also plays a major role in the success of our endeavors. A complete and thorough knowledge and understanding of all the materials mentioned above by all officials is a must to get started. In addition, officials need to strive for consistency within themselves before progressing on to becoming more consistent with every other official. Both points under situations mentioned above and the first and third points mentioned under

Officials are all areas where you as an official have control. Once you have mastered these as an individual, the USA Hockey Officiating Program resources available to all officials can become more effective in addressing consistency among officials.

### **Flexibility**

Another important aspect of good judgment, and ultimately good officiating, is flexibility. An experienced official will recognize that no two games are exactly alike and each game must be treated individually. Even though we strive for consistency from game to game, the difference between the nature of each game calls for flexibility by the official. Flexibility allows the official to react appropriately according to the game without affecting the ability to be consistent.

An example of this concept is when an official has worked a game involving the same two teams previously in the season, maybe even the previous night. The first game may have been physical and required the official to call numerous penalties. Human nature tells us the official will go into the second game with a preconceived notion as to how the game will be played and this is only natural. However, a successful official will be flexible enough to again allow the players to dictate the flow of the game. An official who overcompensates for the rough play of the previous game, even though the players have adjusted, will only frustrate the players and ruin what could potentially be a good game.

### **Judgment Is Not An Exact Science**

Although we have discussed several concepts involved with advanced level judgment in this manual, it is important to recognize that judgment (or game management) is not an exact science. Unlike positioning or skating, proper judgment is not easily taught in exact terms. Judgment may best be taught through practical experience, although considerable experience is still not a guarantee an official will possess good judgment or game management skills. It is apparent the best officials have a certain instinct or feel for the game that is the basis for their success. In most cases, this instinct is natural to the official and is not easily taught to officials who do not possess this quality.

Even though judgment and game management skills are difficult to teach to officials attempting to reach the highest levels, there are still valuable resources available to an official to improve their understanding and enhance their potential to be successful. Knowledge of the rules and their interpretations, an understanding of the penalty guidelines and use of other available resources (videos, past experience) will all allow an official to understand the basics of game management. Another key is the constant review and understanding of the concepts discussed in this manual. Because judgment is not an exact science, the comprehension of the concepts involved with game management is a must in order to establish the instinct necessary to be successful.

The things that we do know for sure about judgment are

- Officials who progress to higher levels of hockey **MUST** possess and apply good judgment.
- The higher the level of hockey, the more judgment is necessary to properly manage the game.
- High levels of judgment and a high level of acceptability as an official go hand in hand.
- Good judgment comes from experience. Experience comes from bad judgment.

## **Judgment Review**

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about judgment. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. In terms of judgment, describe the role of officials in:
  - a. 8U and 10U games
  - b. 12U through 16 & Over games
  - c. Higher levels of hockey
2. List the four criteria for calling an infraction, and give an example of each.
3. Describe factors that may have an impact on judgment at the highest levels of the game.
4. Discuss the criteria for calling a good first penalty.
5.
  - a. Describe “aggressive fouls” and give examples.
  - b. Describe “restraining fouls” and give examples.
  - c. Relate these fouls to ‘black and white penalties’ and ‘purpose infractions.’
6. Define consistency and what factors are involved in establishing consistency?



# ALTERCATIONS

The top priority of the officials during a situation when an altercation develops is the safety of all participants. The Basic and Intermediate Level Manuals carefully outline the proper procedures to be used when breaking up altercations of all kinds. These procedures are the basics that are used by all officials to promote a safe environment and teamwork among the officials. Review those publications thoroughly before proceeding to learn some advanced aspects of responding to altercations covered in this manual.

## Awareness

You have been exposed to this word often during your officiating career. Whether mentioned by an instructor at the seminars you attended, reading through the Officiating Manuals, or a friendly reminder from your partner(s) as you enter the ice, the concept of awareness has been ingrained in your thoughts. Awareness is defined as: being informed or conscious of all surrounding events.

Awareness is probably most applicable when dealing with the prevention of altercations. Your job as an official will be much easier when your complete awareness is at its best. The most successful officials at the highest levels of hockey are the officials who possess the best on-ice awareness. Awareness is to a linesperson as judgment (game management) is to a referee. Many people claim that awareness is a natural thing that cannot be taught. However, the following tips can be used to improve on-ice awareness.

- **Know the history** and relationship between the two teams and individual players. Have the teams played before? What type of style (physical, finesse) does each team play? Are there players on each team who have developed their own rivalry? What is at stake? These are all questions an official should know the answers to prior to stepping on the ice. The pre game meeting is an excellent time for the officials to discuss these issues. Chance favors those who prepare.
- **Hustle, Hustle, Hustle** to prevent all altercations. It is much easier to separate players by standing between them before the altercation has even started.
- **Understand those situations** that have a tendency to provoke altercations and anticipate their occurrences. These include, but are not limited to:
  - Running the goalkeeper
  - Contact in front of goal net (spear, butt end, etc.)
  - An injured player as a result of an infraction (high stick, slash, etc.)
  - Trash talking between players or from benches
  - Restraining (frustration) fouls (i.e., holding, hooking, interference)
  - Lopsided score

- **Awareness** can also be enhanced by communication with your partner(s). Let them know what you know so they can be informed also. You would certainly expect the same courtesy from them.

## Linesperson Involvement

There are certain expectations of an experienced linesperson during an altercation that are not covered in other Officiating Manuals. These procedures and responsibilities may seem to be little things that will have minimal effect on the performance of the officiating team. However, these little things will make everyone's job much easier and will prevent complicated problems which may arise. Study these ideas carefully and implement them during your games.

- Use force only when absolutely necessary. No player wants to be handled, especially by an official. Maintaining control of a player without using force will earn the respect of all players. A player who is being handled unnecessarily by a linesperson will often get frustrated. This frustration will only be relieved by verbally or physically assaulting the linesperson or attempting to get at another player. Both options are best avoided.
- If uncertain as to whether a player is penalized or not, err on the side of caution and bring the player to the penalty bench. It will be much easier to release the player from the penalty bench (psychologically better for the player also) than it would be to find the correct player and escort them to the box later.



- Always be aware of the numbers of the participating players and assist the referee with numbers and instigators when asked.
- When asked to do so, provide your version to the referee in a brief and concise manner.
- Be aware of any players leaving the benches during the altercation and also any infractions which may occur during the fight (spitting, grabbing the facemask).

- Once everything is resolved, get play going as soon as possible. There is no better way to diffuse tempers and distract players than to start play. Keep in mind, the official's best friend is a moving puck.



### Referee Involvement

Higher levels of hockey also require the referee to perform to a high standard and carry out additional responsibilities from what has already been discussed in the Basic and Intermediate Manuals. A referee who does not follow the expected procedures and, therefore, does not assess the proper penalties, will have difficulty managing the remainder of the game. Credibility will also be lost in view of the players, coaches, spectators and league administrators. The following helpful hints will let you perform up to expectations.

- If the instigator rule applies to the altercation, use it. This is not only proper application of the rules, but also the easiest way to send a message that fighting will not be tolerated and those players who start altercations will penalize their teams.
- Your top priority is still the non participating players and the benches. Rely on your linespersons to monitor the altercation. Prevention of additional altercations or players coming off of the benches will be much more productive.
- Take control of the non participating players and benches during an altercation. Be firm. This is not the time to soft touch the teams. Assess the proper penalties for players not following your instructions.
- Verbalize with partners and players to help separate combatants. In some cases, the best way to prevent or slow down a fight is to tell your linespersons to "let em go." Players sometime really don't want to fight and look forward to being separated by the linespersons. When the fear of having no help is imminent, they will quickly reevaluate their desire to engage in an altercation. Other soothing phrases may also help calm the combatants down and make it easier for your partners to separate the players. However, the referee should avoid threatening phrases such as "You're done, or else," which will have little effect on the cooperation of the players.
- When the players are separated, verbalize to your partners as to where the players should be taken. When certain a player is ejected, a linesperson may be able to escort the player off the ice with minimal effort rather than take the player to the penalty bench unnecessarily.
- Be aware of any players leaving the benches. Do not hesitate to ask your partners or the off-ice officials for assistance when necessary.

- Use your memo (riot) pad during multiple altercations or when multiple penalties will be assessed during an altercation. In the heat of battle, it will be very difficult to remember all infractions and players five minutes later when reporting to the penalty timekeeper.
- Position yourself so you can monitor both the benches and the fight(s). This is extremely important during multiple altercations as your partners may be busy with other players when a serious infraction occurs.
- Only get involved physically when absolutely necessary. Some situations where your involvement is necessary include:
  - Injury potential or injury situation, most likely when one player has an obvious advantage during multiple altercation situation.
  - When you can easily step in to avoid a second or third altercation without jeopardizing control of the non participating players.
  - When the linespersons are delayed in getting players to the penalty bench and an altercation is already fizzling.
- Be decisive and efficient when sorting out penalties. When doing so, ask your partners specific questions and expect brief and precise responses. Be specific when giving instructions to your partners regarding additional players needed in the penalty bench and players to be escorted off of the ice. Explain the penalty situation to the captains briefly (no discussion) and summarize the bottom line to them (i.e., white is short for five minutes). Only answer interpretation questions and do so in a precise and efficient manner.
- Get play started as soon as possible after the altercation to diffuse tempers and distract the players and coaches. The referee's best friend is a moving puck.

### Altercations Review

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about altercations. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Why is awareness important in altercation situations?
2. Describe the involvement of Linespersons during altercations.
3. Describe the involvement of the Referee during altercations.

# OFF-ICE OFFICIALS AND THEIR ROLE

The off-ice officials play an important role in the efficient conducting of the game and are recognized as an extension of the on-ice officiating team. Strong, competent off-ice officials will help make on-ice officials look good while a weak team of off-ice officials will only create problems for the on-ice team. The Basic and Intermediate Level Manuals discuss the responsibilities of off-ice officials and will provide on-ice officials with the knowledge to help off-ice officials perform their duties. This manual advises the official of some additional roles of off-ice officials seen at the highest levels of hockey.

## Off-Ice Officials (Highest Levels)

As officials reach the junior, collegiate or professional levels of hockey, some additional roles are taken on by off-ice officials that the on-ice officials should be aware of. These levels of hockey are conducted for entertainment and often times draw huge crowds. The off-ice officials at this level are extremely competent and are paid, so their expected performance is of the highest caliber. Let's take a look at some of the additional roles met by off-ice officials at the highest levels of hockey.

- **Official Scorer**

- Will often times have access to television replay.
- Awards assists.

- Will have the final say in disputes regarding goals and assists.
- Will serve as the communication link between officials and team management.

- **Video Replay Official**

- Will have access to television replay.
- Will advise the referee in cases of disputed goals.
- Communicates with the referee via telephone at scorer's table.

- **Commercial Coordinator**

- Coordinates TV time outs.
- Communicates with on-ice officials the time out procedures.

## Role Of Off-Ice Officials

Off-ice officials are an important part of higher level games. Each off-ice official has specific duties that will assist the on-ice officials and will ensure the game runs smoothly. In most cases, the off-ice officials are competent and knowledgeable employees or volunteers of the home team. They are there to work as a team with the on-ice officials and when treated with respect, they will be supportive of the on-ice officiating team and their calls. As an official, consider the off-ice officials as part of your team. You will quickly learn that you cannot function efficiently without them.

## Off-Ice Officials and Their Role Review

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about off-ice officials and their role. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Give examples of how Off-Ice Officials can help the on-ice officials.

# POST-GAME DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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The responsibilities of an official do not end when the horn sounds at the conclusion of the game. Proper scoresheet maintenance and the completion of game reports become even more important as an official advances on to the highest levels of hockey. Your off-ice presence also becomes important as you are not only representing yourself as an official, but also the league which has assigned you. The vast majority of officials at higher levels are fired for their off-ice activities and not their on-ice performance. For this reason, any official who has aspirations to work higher levels of hockey should be completely familiar with the post game responsibilities of an official and should follow the guidelines discussed in this manual.

## Meeting With Supervisor

Part of an official's post game responsibility may include setting some time aside to meet with a game supervisor. In many cases, the supervisor is a representative of the league and may have some input as to future assignments. The feedback they provide you is designed to make you a better official. Take notes during the session and use them as reference material to review prior to future games. It is difficult to remember what was said several days or weeks after the conversation and your notes will bring back key points.



Let the supervisor control the conversation. Often times, they will ask you what you think before providing their feedback. This is done to measure your understanding and feel for the game and can also be a determinant of your composure and attitude. Answer this question with confidence and be realistic. A good official will know what areas need improvement and will recognize key situations during the game that should be discussed. Be sure to ask questions while being polite and courteous. Your notes should include items which describe areas where you need improvement and also those areas considered to be your strengths.

Be positive about the critique and how you will react during your next game. Officials who take a critique too seriously and get down often have a difficult time responding during the next game and lack the necessary confidence. Acknowledge the fact that each supervisor is a little different as they all have different personalities. Some supervisors will be extremely tough and may not point out any positive aspects of your performance. Take this criticism to heart while also refraining from disagreeing or arguing with the supervisor. Keep in mind that they are there to help you. Finally, be sure to take knowledge learned and apply to future assignments. Officials who fail to improve and learn from their mistakes will not last long in a very competitive field such as officiating.

## Post Game Socializing

After the game and all of your post game duties are complete, you may want to relax and unwind with your partners while grabbing a bite to eat. This is a great time to catch up on some old discussions with your partners who you may not have seen for several months. Although this is perfectly acceptable, there are some guidelines you should follow in maintaining a professional standard.

- Avoid establishments frequented by coaches and players. There is no reason to put yourself in a position where a confrontation may occur or you may easily be recognized. These types of places will also attract a large group of spectators who follow the players and coaches and will recognize you, possibly creating an uncomfortable situation.
- Avoid wearing the league or USA Hockey colors when going out after the game. Many leagues provide jackets or other apparel that if worn will easily identify you.
- In conjunction with the first two points, avoid drawing unnecessary attention to yourself as an official. You would only be setting yourself up for a less than desirable situation.
- When talking with spectators, limit your discussions about the game. Point out to them that this is your free time and you would prefer not to mix work with pleasure. This will help avoid difficult questions or questions you may not want to answer.
- Avoid criticizing partners, players, coaches or league officials. You expect the same courtesy from them.
- Behave professionally at all times. Keep in mind you are representing the league, USA Hockey, yourself and fellow officials. One bad night on your part will tarnish an entire hockey community.

## **Post-Game Duties and Responsibilities Review**

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about post-game duties and responsibilities. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Describe aspects of meeting with the Supervisor after the game.
2. Describe ways to accept constructive criticism from Supervisors.
3. Discuss concerns about post-game socializing.



# HOCKEY OFFICIATING: THE MENTAL GAME

We have already thoroughly reviewed the physical aspects of officiating in this Officiating Manual Series. Although, skating, conditioning, positioning and following the proper procedures all play a major role in the overall success of an official, the difference between an excellent official and just a good official may very well be determined by the mental aspect of the game. The Intermediate Manual touched on some issues regarding mental preparation working with your partner(s). That information will be very useful to the official at all levels. This section will discuss more advanced mental aspects of an official's on-ice performance.

## Response Time

The response time (the time elapsed from the moment the event occurs until the official has responded by assessing a penalty) of top officials can best be described as being consistent. Sudden changes in signals or timing indicates something is wrong. For example, an official who hastily responds to a violent infraction appears to be angry and may alienate the players. An official who establishes a consistent rhythm of timing will appear to always be in control and fully composed.

The tendency for most officials is to establish a rhythm based on the events with the greatest frequency. The end result is a rhythm that is inappropriate for less obvious events or a rhythm based on the emotions of the official. Quick calls become questionable and slow calls are generally unconvincing. Greater consistency in response time is often generated by better officials who allow the uncertain events to establish the rhythm of response. These officials are more successful at maintaining a consistent response to events, even when their emotions are high.

## Double Checking Your Decisions

The tendency of an official is the desire to always be decisive and this is generally considered a good trait of a top official. However, this decisiveness does not eliminate the need for officials to double check their decisions in some instances. Top officials have the ability to wait until everything that might happen has happened before reacting. In many respects, the official is double checking the decision that may have already been made by taking advantage of the time it takes for the event to be complete.

There may be some instances during the course of the game when an official has not seen the entire play. As a last resort, experienced officials may verify their decision by the reaction of the players involved with the play. This method certainly cannot be used to replace proper positioning, concentration, and good judgment. However, the following examples demonstrate how player reactions can help verify the official's decision during the double checking process.

### **Official loses sight of the puck during a scramble in front of the goal.**

- Goalkeeper will generally put head down when the puck is covered.
- Forward will stop driving the net when the puck is covered.
- Players will stop scrambling and look to the referee for a whistle.

### **Potential off-side where the puck is barely kept inside the zone.**

- When the puck is kept in, the player will rarely lose stride and a quick pass or shot will result.
- When the puck comes out of the zone, the player will toss the puck back in or turn back to the play after releasing the puck.
- The defensive partner will back off the blue line and look for a pass when the puck leaves the zone.

### **Close play at the goal line where the official does not see the puck.**

- The defending team will stop playing and bow their heads with no effort to appeal to the referee.
- The goaltender will make no effort to cover the puck or get up quickly.
- The attacking team will all celebrate with no resistance from the defending team.

Although these instances are no guarantee of a correct call, they are indicators that allow the official to make an intelligent decision based on all of the facts. Officials who have a tendency to rely solely on these indicators will not be successful and need to spend more time improving their positioning and concentration.

## Making Mistakes

As discussed in other sections of the Officiating Manuals, officials will make mistakes on occasion and the best policy is to admit when a mistake has been made. Top officials minimize the mistakes that are made while officials who find themselves making a lot of errors are lacking concentration and commitment. Officials who tend to judge events on their relevance and not simply by their occurrence will react logically and make fewer mistakes. On the other hand, officials who tend to anticipate the occurrence make a greater number of mistakes as the event may not happen as anticipated.

Many of the perceived mistakes made by officials from a spectator's perspective are actually a disagreement on whether a penalty should be called and not whether an event actually occurred. Everyone generally agrees on

what happened. The difference is in the interpretation of what happened and what the response of the officials should be. Even though the official made the correct call based on their interpretation, the audience assumes the official made a mistake because they disagree.

Any single event may bring forth a variety of reactions from the officials or the players and spectators. The reaction will largely depend on the needs at the moment the event occurs. A team who needs a power play late in the game in order to have a better chance of winning is more likely to react stronger to a marginal infraction than in the first period. This is also true in regards to an official's response as mentioned in the section on game management. The referee's decision not to assess a penalty may be viewed as a mistake in the third period by the team needing an advantage while the winning team views the call as the correct call. The same incident in the first period may not provoke any response at all.

The official's reaction to an event may also bring forth a variety of responses depending on the needs of the moment. For example, contact between opposing players who do not have possession of the puck may be responded to by an official with:

1. Bureaucratic appeal – A literal interpretation of the rules which would require some infraction being called.
2. Appeal to common sense – An application of the spirit of the rules in which case an infraction may or may not be called.
3. Appeal to justice – A stance which supports the audience's demands for consistency.
4. Appeal to order – A ruling which upholds the official's obligation to maintain control over the game.

It should be clear from the different stances available to officials that even when there is consensus as to what has occurred, there may be considerable disagreement as to what should be done about it. A response based upon one type of appeal may be contrary to a response based upon the other possible appeals. More frequently, however, events are simply seen as different by the various audiences, depending on their position of observation and personal bias. Consequently, the margin for disagreement is great.

Once these features of perception and interpretation are understood, it becomes more difficult to simply classify a particular ruling by an official as a mistake.

### **Reacting To Pressure**

Although every official would like to think they are not influenced by the reactions of players, coaches and spectators, human nature dictates that various audiences do have an impact on the responses of an official. How

much depends on the official, the status of the audience, and the nature of their influence.

As discussed in the section on double checking your decisions, the official may seek clarification when an ambiguous incident occurs. The crowd reaction may serve as the cue which prompts a decision by the official. Although experienced officials depend on this reaction less, they are simply using the audience reaction as information to reach a decision.

However, some officials may feel their sense of justice has been violated when an audience does not react favorably to a decision. This in turn may cause the official to retaliate by basing part of their next decision on their desire to punish those who reacted unfavorably. This practice is avoided by top officials, but is more common with officials who are insecure in their role or lack experience and is one means of unconsciously reacting to pressure.

One way officials tend to insulate themselves from attacks from the audience is to play act. The thought here is if you act like you are not frazzled or affected by their actions, they will be less likely to continue their actions. As soon as the official appears to have lost control, the intensity and degree of audience's assault will only increase, making it that much more difficult to play act for the remainder of the game.

An official's demeanor often determines the tempo of the game. An official who appears to be in control will minimize unnecessary events that will slow down a game. The official's presence, style, body movements and facial expressions tells everyone whether they are in control. An official who has mastered these facets of officiating will have less pressure to respond to as the tempo of the game will be faster and the perception of the official's competence will be greater.

Are officials objective? The answer to this question is always the same through the eyes of the officials. The answer given by spectators and players will oftentimes be different. The correct answer is yes, if they can transcend the influences of the moment and adopt a neutral and unbiased stance. However, this is a human impossibility. In reality, the best an official can ever do is to be aware of their own biases and compensate for them. Although not totally objective by definition, the official who recognizes their biases and compensates for them is certainly fair. That is all anyone can really ask for is for the official to be fair.

### **Officiating Slumps**

Officials are prone to going through a slump similarly to teams or individual players. These slumps are characterized by the prevalence of self doubt or a lack of confidence and can be initiated by a bad outing or burn-out. As with

players, it is not easy to get up for every game and many officials experience a slump during mid season. Although slumps are impossible to permanently avoid, all officials should do their best to minimize the duration and severity. A revitalization break or a “big game” are oftentimes the most effective ways to break out of a slump.

### Psychological Skills

There are two basic psychological skills that are important in the success of the top officials. Imagery is the skill of recreating in your mind the experiences you have had or the experiences you would like to have. Pre game preparation, post game review, and on-ice decision making all require the official to use imagery and the most successful officials have the ability to control their images to make them do what they want.

Most officials visualize assessing a crucial penalty or executing a face-off and proper imagery involves all of the senses such as hearing your blades screeching the ice (auditory imagery), feeling your body make the movements (kinesthetic imagery), and reliving the apprehension and anxiety of critical game situations (emotional imagery). Together, these elements of imagery provide a vivid representation of your experiences or desired experiences.

Research clearly shows that athletes who take advantage of this psychological skill enhance their performance. Even though imagery cannot replace conditioning and physical practice, it can help officials come closer to performing nearer to their potential.

The second psychological skill, attribution, has two basic types: internal and external. Attribution is simply the need to explain why we succeed or fail to ourselves. Internal attributions are made to things under the direct control of the individual and are better with officials accepting responsibility for their success or failures when such feelings of responsibility are warranted. Examples of internal attributions include “I have ability” or “I have put forth effort.” Lack of effort is generally a psychologically healthy explanation for failure that protects self confidence by not focusing on a seeming lack of ability. Also, to recognize failure was the result of not working hard enough is oftentimes motivating.

External attributions are outside the realm of individual control and are characterized by the following examples: “My partner wasn’t very good” or “That was a lucky call.” In this instance, the official is not taking responsibility for failure. This official explains a bad game as being due to outside forces and there is little that could have been done to change the situation. This scenario often promotes a sense of helplessness and adversely affects self confidence, and is extremely destructive to the success of the official.

### Setting Goals

Setting goals is important to the motivation of athletes. Challenges spur effort and reaching a goal provides a sense of accomplishment, which is important to building self confidence. Sports psychologists have learned the most effective goals are:

1. Those which are realistic, yet challenging.
2. Stated as specifically as possible and related to a particular skill or behavior.
3. Short term rather than long term.
4. Those which the athletes can control.

Among the most frequent problems encountered is setting goals about things that are beyond your control. Officials can control their effort, their emotions, and their performances, but not the effort, emotions, or performances of fellow officials.

To realize success in officiating and life means achieving purposeful and realistic goals; therefore, goal setting is an essential beginning to successful officiating. Consistent success calls for consistency in setting goals. The following seven steps are effective goal setting advice for success in officiating and life.

### Seven Steps To Successful Goal Setting

*By James G. Bennet, from “The Washington Coach.”  
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To realize success in sports and life means achieving purposeful and realistic goals. Goal setting, therefore, is an essential beginning to successful sports activity. Consistent success calls for consistency in setting goals. Effective goal setting demands that certain steps are taken. Here are seven steps in goal setting for success in sports and life.

**STEP 1: Self Survey** – Take time to reflect on your present athletic and officiating skills and development. Be broad in your thinking. Rate yourself in as many categories as possible on a scale from ten to one with ten signifying optimal development.

For example, what level of progress have you achieved in self confidence, courage, adaptability, patience, clarity, leadership, concentration, emotional control, ability to relax, aggressiveness, etc.

Maximum mastery in any of those areas of inner control would greatly affect individual performance. Mastery in several or all of them leads to outstanding performance.

Rate yourself also in the area of physical control. For example: agility, grace, adeptness, balance, eye/hand coordination, timing, endurance, physical or game technique, reaction time, and so on.

**STEP 2: Goal Setting** – With your survey completed, take the next step of checking each item rated five or less. Those items are the most likely to be chosen as a goal. For instance, if you rate concentration as a four, then set a goal of becoming a master of concentration; or if a player, help them to see the need for this as a goal. If your decision making ability is rated a five, then set a goal to always make the right decisions at the right time. If you have many items rated five or less, work with them before going on with the six and over group. Identifying areas that you want to improve is the best way to determine your goals for success. Put your goals into writing so they can be checked frequently. This also makes for easier evaluation of progress. Consider long range as well as short range goals. How do you want to see yourself a year from now? Where will your progress take you?

**STEP 3: Define Your Goals** – The most common reason for failure to achieve goals is found in the failure to properly define them. Many people assume they know what they mean when they declare their intentions, but, in fact, tend to be vague. Words are used, but often not with specific or conscious meaning. This is important because you cannot succeed with a goal any better than you have defined it. You are not likely to succeed with a goal beyond your understanding of the meaning that you have for it.

Take each goal and write out a complete and concise definition. In some cases, you may require a full page for a goal, but often a shorter one will do the job.

By writing and defining your goals on paper, you are already in the process of programming them at the subconscious level. You are truly making the first step toward achieving them.

**STEP 4: Write Down A Plan Of Action** – This too will help to reinforce the goal in your mind. It also helps to clarify it while providing more positive working material for the subconscious. This procedure is simple to follow. Review your list of defined goals, then reflect in writing on the steps, actions, routines, and schedules necessary to implement that goal.

**STEP 5: Make A Commitment** – Commitment is vital. It is a pledge to yourself that your goal will be achieved. Nothing can stop you from pursuing it. Be determined. Remember, your overall goal is to be a consistent success. Sticking with each goal until realized is the hallmark of a winner.

As you commit yourself to these achievements, and succeed with them, you will experience a feeling of pride, satisfaction, and the thrill that comes with victory. You will enjoy many victories within yourself as well as in the area of competition.

**STEP 6: Get Worked Up** – Your subconscious mind which helps you attain your goal, responds to feeling. Therefore,

whenever possible, generate as much feeling for your goal as you can. Desire, wanting, and enthusiasm are the emotions that generate the energy and force that move the subconscious into action. It is more than knowing; it is the power that impels us to our greatest achievements. Muster as much positive feeling and desire for each goal as you possibly can. Want it.... Desire it.... Let nothing and no one deny you.

**STEP 7: Go For It** – You've got your goals now. You know where you're heading. You've written them down and defined them. You have a plan to follow, and you're committed to achieving them. Now, with enthusiasm, you can follow your dream. In addition to the actual doing that brings you to your goal, add the dimension of mental programming. Put your goals before your subconscious mind and take advantage of its superior wisdom and energy. Allow it to help you attain them.

You can do this by taking a few minutes each day as if for mental workouts. Relax your mind, and then present your defined goal to the subconscious mind by imagining it as already realized. Mentally picture for a few minutes. As you do, imagine the feelings that you would expect to have when the goal is really attained. Do this every day and you will achieve rapid movement toward the realization of your goals.

### Successful Officiating

So is it possible to easily summarize the mental part of officiating? Probably not. We have just started to touch on the outer limits of psychology and the mental aspects of officiating. However, the following points and suggestions may be the key to successful officiating and summarize those characteristics which separates the top officials from the average officials.

- The ability to concentrate and focus on the events that are occurring.
- The ability to identify the important calls of the game and react accordingly.
- The ability to anticipate the sequence of events as they are likely to occur.
- The ability to recognize the different potential range of events that occur at different levels.
- The ability to wait for everything that might happen to happen before reacting.
- The ability to judge an event on its relevance, not on its occurrence.
- The ability to allow the uncertain events to establish the rhythm of response.
- The ability to maintain a certain amount of arrogance, but not overconfidence. Overconfidence leads to mistakes and minimizes the pre game anxiety.
- The presence of a mild case of pre game jitters promotes preparedness and psyches you up for the task at hand.

## **Hockey Officiating: The Mental Game Review**

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about the mental aspects of officiating. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Discuss the significance of these aspects of “Officiating: The Mental Game:”
  - a. Response time
  - b. Double-checking your decisions
  - c. Making mistakes
  - d. Possible different responses to the same event in a game.
  - e. Reacting to pressure
  - f. Officiating slumps
  - g. Psychological skills
  - h. Setting goals
2. Describe characteristics that separate the top officials from the average officials.



# COMMUNICATION WITH PLAYERS AND COACHES

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Both verbal and non verbal communication have been covered elsewhere in this Officiating Manual series. The communication tips presented in the Basic and Intermediate level Manuals are valuable tools for all officials to use and should be reviewed regularly. These communication skills still form the basis for successful communication at all levels of hockey. However, at the highest levels of hockey, some additional communication techniques may prove beneficial to the official in a highly contested game. These skills will be discussed in this section.

## Injecting Humor

The normal thought process of officiating philosophy tells us there is no room for humor in the course of officiating a game. Although this is basically true because many officials will get themselves into trouble when humor is injected at an inappropriate time, injecting humor into a contest correctly can be an effective communication skill. Many experienced officials have mastered this skill and enhanced their acceptability.

Human nature tells us that using the proper amount of humor at the appropriate time will increase the likability of an official. Proper use of humor allows the official to appear to be more human and less like an authority figure, resulting in a better rapport with the players. The most effective use of humor by an official involves inserting a quick one line expression that will ease the tension. Be sure to smile when using humor in order to let people know you are not serious.

Now recognizing that humor can be an effective communication skill, it is important to remember to never poke fun at players or coaches unless you have developed this type of rapport with them over the course of several games. An unsuspecting player or coach who is the target of your humor may become embarrassed or accept it as a personal attack. In this case, their frustration level will increase and your credibility will be damaged. When humor is used, it should be general in nature or pokes fun at yourself or your partner(s) without belittling them or damaging their credibility.

## Calm, Cool And Collected?

The Officiating Manuals have all emphasized the importance of remaining calm and cool at all times. This approach is still the most successful and portrays the most professional image. However, in a less than ideal officiating world, the calm, cool and collected approach doesn't always work. In

some instances, the calm and cool official may appear to be timid or afraid during a hotly contested game.

We have all heard the phrase "when the going gets tough, the tough get going." There are times during the course of the season where an official has to respond aggressively to the intensity of the game. Tough, heated games call for a more aggressive approach by the officials. The key to success is the ability of the official to be tough and aggressive on the outside while maintaining the calm and under control approach on the inside.

An official who responds to a tough game aggressively and in a tough manner gives the impression they are taking charge and is in control of the game. This perception sends a message to the players that the officials mean business and will not tolerate out of control behavior. The following are examples of how an official takes a more aggressive approach while still being in control:

- Give more commands to the players and less requests. Instead of asking them to "watch your sticks," tell them to "keep your sticks down" in a firm and decisive voice.
- Establish more physical presence after the whistle by skating closer to the players and standing tall.
- Use facial expressions to your advantage by creating a mad look on your face to let the players know you are angry with their actions.
- Be less willing to discuss issues and tell them that this is how it is going to be as long as they continue to play the way they are.
- Use body language that asserts authority. Standing tall or using a hand gesture to motion them to the penalty bench is a sign that you are the person in control of this game.

Although the aggressive behavior mentioned above is necessary under certain circumstances, the official must still be able to turn it on and off as the hostilities of the game changes. An official who uses aggressive behavior when it is not necessary or after the game has calmed down may aggravate the players and suddenly take on the alternate appearance of being out of control. The most successful officials have the ability to tailor their emotions to the mood of the game.

An important factor in using the aggressive behavior is that it is used only when the official makes a conscious effort to do so. If used at any other time, the official is out of control and will only make matters worse. Out of control behavior by an official is unacceptable under any circumstances and should not be tolerated by players, coaches, spectators, and league administrators.

## **Communication With Players and Coaches Review**

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about communicating with players/coaches. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Explain why injecting humor can be an effective communication tool and what can be most effective in doing so.
2. In what situations is it not appropriate to inject humor?
3. What are some communication techniques that can be effectively used in tough games or difficult situations?

# COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND INVOLVEMENT

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The advanced level official plays a very important role in the hockey world. They not only officiate the highest level games, but also serve as role models for younger officials. Some day, the 14-year-old official will want to be doing the same games you are doing. Your involvement with the Officiating Program or local youth hockey organization will go a long way towards contributing to a positive hockey environment. We need the experienced and advanced level officials to stay involved with the programs and take an active role in the development of hockey.

## Local Involvement

We often hear about the player, coach or official who has achieved their goals to reach the highest level and is never seen. From time to time, we also hear about the ones who do remain active as a volunteer on a local level. Your experience and expertise is a valuable resource for the still developing segments of hockey participants. Here are some of the things you can do to remain involved on the local level and project a positive light on the sport of hockey in the community.

**Share your knowledge** – You possess a tremendous amount of knowledge that can benefit less experienced players, coaches, and officials. Take some time to share that knowledge and experience with them. They will become better and you will feel rewarded.

**Continue to work younger levels** – The players and coaches at these levels see you working the important game and immediately respect you. When they see you on the ice for their game, they feel important and are excited. You also have instant credibility. Continue to work some younger levels of hockey. It is a great way to hone your skills and means a lot to the participants.

**Work with younger officials** – The best possible learning experience for them is to work with and learn from the best officials in the area. Your efforts will be greatly appreciated and will leave a lasting impression on the younger official.

**Promote the Officiating Program** – Generate some enthusiasm towards the perfection of officiating skills. Even though you may not always agree with how things are supposed to be done, promoting the Officiating Program line will leave a positive impression. Remember, they are most likely to use you as an example.

**Help with seminars** – Even if you only have a few minutes to stop in a lower level seminar, your presence will send a very strong message on the importance of learning. It also sends a strong message of support and credibility to the Instructors Staff.

**Offer skating tips or lessons** – Offer to meet a younger official at a public skating session and work on skating skills. You can also work on your own at the same time. Schedule some ice time through the local association and conduct a power skating session for all of the officials.

**Make officials aware of opportunities** – Let them know what it takes to get to your level and provide them with resources they can use to be successful. Oftentimes, officials do not apply to or attend development camps or advanced officiating seminars because they are unaware they are even taking place.

**Community charity work** – Donate your time to help spruce up the rink or assist in fund raising. You can lend a tremendous amount of credibility to the effort and it will also be rewarding for you. Most importantly, it sheds a positive light on officials and hockey in general.

**Take an active leadership role** – One of the biggest areas where we are lacking in is in quality leadership. You could make a big difference by becoming actively involved in a leadership role.

## National Involvement

Many advanced level officials are asked to become involved with the National Program as instructors. Our staff of instructors for our District Officiating Seminars, Instructor Training Programs, and Summer Development Camps is constantly changing as we look to involve more qualified officials. Officials who remain active on the local level and are officiating at the highest levels are the first people we turn to. For the Instructors Program, officials who have been very active on the local and district levels as seminar instructors and maintain the highest level of teaching standards are asked to join our national staff.

For the officials who are active administratively, an appointment to a national committee serves as a reward for their hard work and dedication. The Local Association Committee, Manual Revision, and the Evaluation Committee are just some examples of important programs within USA Hockey that may need your help. District appointments such as a Seminar Coordinator or Evaluation Coordinator are also given to officials who show a certain level of knowledge, commitment and dedication to the Officiating Program on a local level.

Finally, every official can become involved nationally by promoting USA Hockey and the Officiating Program. A lot of effort and hard work is put into this volunteer organization. Your ability to promote ice hockey in general will go a long way in expanding, improving, and preserving this great sport that has given us a lot.

## **Community Relations and Involvement Review**

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about community relations and involvement. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Why is it important for our most experienced officials to be involved in the game in other ways?
2. Give some examples of how to become involved on the local and national levels.

# ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

Throughout different levels of hockey, there are different forms of officiating supervisors. The supervisor, no matter at what level, can be an important ally of the official. At the highest levels, the relationship between the official and the supervisor may make the difference between the official being successful or not. It is important for every official to understand the role of the supervisor, whether they are the assignor, evaluator, or league representative.

## Accepting Constructive Criticism

There is very little margin for error while officiating high level hockey. One costly mistake could make the difference on whether you are assigned games at that level. One way to improve is to accept constructive performance feedback and work on the areas where improvement is needed. There is no excuse for making the same mistake twice.

You will receive performance feedback from a variety of individuals throughout your career. Each supervisor may have a different style, approach, or technique in delivering the critique. You oftentimes may not want to hear what is being said. Even though each supervisor may use a different approach, they are all there for the same reason, to help you improve. The following information is designed to help you understand the role of the supervisor and give you tips on how to receive constructive criticism.

- You must develop mutual respect and cooperation between you and the supervisor. Remember, respect is earned, so a good place to start is to behave and perform in a manner that earns respect.
- You share the same ultimate goal, improvement of the official.

- Compromise is the key to any successful critique. You will probably have to be the first to bend.
- You must assume the supervisor is offering an objective view of your performance.
- You must always assume you have some areas where you can improve.
- The Do's of accepting constructive criticism:
  - Take notes on areas that need improvement, you can't expect to remember everything
  - Accept the blame for legitimate mistakes
  - Listen attentively to all supervisors, even if you disagree
  - Ask questions that may not have been answered
  - Take all comments to heart and make an effort to improve in those areas
- A sincere intelligent approach to criticism will lend itself to improvement.
- Competent hockey officials continuously attempt to improve themselves and measure their performance against the very highest standards.

## League Supervisors

In many cases, at the higher levels, the supervisors are actually employees of the respective league. Their job is to critique the officials and report back to the league administrators after every game. Even though you still have to assume they are there to help you also, your off-ice relationship (attitude) through the eyes of the supervisor may play an important role in your advancement. A poor attitude or relationship will produce a negative effect on your reputation and is a reflection of your maturity. Very few officials are ever released for having a positive attitude towards constructive criticism. Much of your success may depend on your willingness to accept constructive criticism and develop a positive relationship with the supervisors.

## Role of the Supervisor Review

The following questions highlight some of the key points you should have picked up from this chapter. Take a few minutes to review what you have learned about the role of the supervisor. When finished, you can compare your answers to the correct answers that appear in the back of this manual.

1. Identify some tips on how to successfully receive constructive criticism?



# ANSWERS TO REVIEW QUESTIONS

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The following consists of the correct answers to the review questions that have appeared at the end of each chapter. Compare these correct answers to your answers for each of the questions in order to find out how well you understand advanced officiating philosophies and procedures.

## Personal Appearance Review

1. You can gain instant respect and credibility by looking and acting like a professional. You are representing not only yourself, but also the league or the governing body involved. A well-groomed, neat and professional official will represent all involved in a positive way. That positive manner will lead to your acceptance by players, coaches and management.
2. Fidgeting with your equipment = you are nervous or uncomfortable  
  
Sloppy washout or delay signals = you do not care about doing things right  
  
Holding hands on hips or pointing with index finger = angry or intimidating  
  
Angry facial expressions = appear to be out of control  
  
Laughing = lacks intensity and focus  
  
Loud, firm voice all the time = intimidating; save it for the “big” moments
3. Use upright posture while skating, while still bending knees, with head always facing the action. Arm swing should be front-to-back, not side-to-side. Take long, powerful strides. These items will create a positive perception of you as an official.
4. Remember that you still represent the officiating community, even after you leave the rink. Avoid establishments that players or coaches frequent. If you do run into players or coaches, use discretion when discussing the game. Be diplomatic and cautious if you do discuss anything related to the game. Avoid discussing your partners or other officials. Arrive back at the hotel at a reasonable hour. Imagine what the perception would be if you were observed entering the hotel in the early morning hours when you had another game that night!

## Physical Conditioning Review

1. Establish a regular conditioning program that is right for you – consult with a professional. Stretch every day, before and after exercise. Include weight training for your entire body – legs, upper body and abdomen. Include cardiovascular training – running, cycling and other aerobic exercises.

2. Fluid replacement is very important – consume plenty of fluids before, during and after every activity. Water is the best source of fluid replacement. Fruit juices and specialized fluid replacement drinks are also adequate. Carbohydrates are a good source of energy for your body. Cereals, pasta, bread, potatoes and fresh fruits are good sources. Protein is necessary for muscle development and repair. Lean meat, poultry, fish, some vegetables (i.e. broccoli, beans) and low-fat dairy products (i.e. skim milk, yogurt, cottage cheese) are good sources. Sugars are a source of more immediate energy. Fresh fruits and candy are sources of sugars. Fats are high in calories, slow to be digested and provide little nutritional value. Fried foods, processed foods, fatty meats and high-fat dairy products are sources of fat. Calories are units used to measure energy. Weight is either gained or lost depending on the intake of calories daily versus calories used in activities.
3. a. Interval training involves timed periods of intense activity followed by a rest period that is twice as long as the activity period.  
b. It is important for officials because it simulates game conditions – skating hard for a period of time and then a rest period during stoppages in play.  
**c. On-ice interval training example #1:**  
Skate hard three laps around the ice, attempting to complete the laps in a predetermined time. Rest, while still in some motion, for twice the predetermined time. Repeat this process several times.  
**On-ice interval training example #2:**  
Sprint hard from one end of the ice to the other in a predetermined time. Rest, while in some motion, for twice the predetermined time. Repeat this process 6 to 12 times forward and backward.  
d. Off-ice interval training techniques: sprints, life-cycles, stairmasters

## Fundamentals of Skating Review

1. a. Ready position; knee bend; thrust down and through the ice with heel-out/toe-in arc; weight on ball of foot on glide leg; glide leg heel points in desired direction; head and chest up  
b. Knees bent (toe-knee-shoulder alignment); toes out; heels in; weight on inside edges and on center of blade; slight forward lean; head up; ready position upon completion  
c. Knees bent; non-glide skate in heel-to-heel position (hip rotation – 1/4 turn); skates form 90 degree angle with breaking skate crossing the T; transfer weight to inside edge on center of blade; head up; stop facing center ice; ready position when completed  
d. Turn shoulders and hips in intended direction; weight alternates between inside edge of outside skate and outside edge of inside skate; alternate full extension of the inside and outside legs during the thrust phase;

knee bend; recover to ready position with outside skate never leaving the ice; head up

- e. Knee bend; shoulders level and head up; strong thrusts to full extension from both inside and outside edges; efficient recovery to ready position with skates barely leaving ice; reach to center with inside skate prior to start of crossunder
- f. Skates shoulder width apart; pivot knee has exaggerated knee bend (over the toe of the skate); thrust out with non-glide skate; turn shoulders and hips in the direction of the turn ('steering wheel'); weight on outside edge of lead skate and inside edge of trailing skate; one crossunder to establish momentum in other direction; continue forward stride; head up; always turn towards center of ice
- g. Proper weight transfer; turn heel of skate so toe is pointing in opposite direction; rotate hips and shoulders while transferring weight; head up; always turn toward center of ice

### **Pre-Game Duties and Responsibilities Review**

1. Carefully review the rules that apply to this game, rather than rules used in games at other levels you may work; plan your game-day activities: pre-game meal, transportation to rink, arrival time; visualize previous key situations and how they were handled; visualize each signal and each potential infraction.
2. Be the first to enter the ice surface; monitor the center ice red line during warm-ups; be aware of previous problems between opponents.
3. If required at certain levels, monitor starting line-ups.
4. Remove your helmet and hold it right-side up at your side or place it in the penalty bench. Stand at center ice facing the flag. The Referee should stand on the center-ice face-off spot. The Linespersons should stand on the center-ice red line at the points where it intersects the face-off circle. Remain still during the entire anthem(s).

### **Conducting Face-Offs Review**

1. The Linesperson not conducting the face-off is responsible.
2. The back Linesperson should blow the whistle and point toward the offending player's end. The Linesperson dropping the puck must eject the center of the offending team.
3. During power plays; those occurring in the last moments of a close game; those occurring when there is a change of momentum in a game. At these times, officials must be very certain that the face-off is conducted fairly. Should try, as much as possible, to keep the original centers in the face-off circle. May need to use more than the allotted five seconds and be very aware of a "false face-off" (where the puck accidentally hits a player's stick on the way down to the ice)

### **Positioning Review**

1. Players are jamming the end boards and the Referee is trapped by the goal. The Referee wants to verbalize to players who have the puck stalled along the far boards. The Referee wants to avoid having to skate in front of the players' benches during line changes.
2. The Referee should skate behind the goal very rarely, perhaps once or twice a season. If a Referee skates behind the goal more often, that may mean a lack of anticipation or perhaps lack of hustle to get into proper position.
3. Watch the flow of the play and not the puck. Referees who focus only on the puck will be constantly moving; this will also promote "tunnel vision." Monitor puck possession and the intent of the player to look up the ice. Key on the attacking defensemen – when they retreat, play will probably leave the zone. When they hold the blue line, play will more likely stay in the zone. Do not over anticipate the play.
4. Needs to be patient, and then move according to the flow of play. Should skate forward when play moves quickly in one direction in order to continue facing the play. Should skate backwards near the normal manner when play stays in center ice.
5. "Hints" an official can use to determine when to leave the blue line: Attacking defensemen retreat from the zone. Puck is skated up the middle of the ice. Long pass is completed near the blue line. "Hints" that an official should stay at the blue line: Attacking defensemen hold at the blue line. Puck is carried along the boards. Wingers are too high for a breakout pass. "Hints" that play is reversing back into end zone after leaving zone: Attacking team uses one-player forecheck, stacking players in the neutral zone. Player loses possession of the puck in the neutral zone. Puck does not cross center red line. "Hints" that play will continue completely through neutral zone: Offensive team switches to a defensive mode. Player with puck has teammate(s) in good position to receive a pass
6. In the end zone, the official on the goal line is responsible for goals and penalties while the outside official can think more like a Linesperson in the three-official system. The outside official can call major penalties and flagrant minor penalties, especially if they occur outside the field of vision of the official on the goal line. In stalled neutral zone play, the officials will be diagonally opposite each other. The official who trailed the play out of the end zone will have primary responsibility for penalties.

### **Assessing Penalties and Other Infractions Review**

1. Be more aggressive with penalty signals during a game that is hard-fought and requires more presence by the officials. Be more deliberate with penalty signals in a more 'quiet' game. Speak in a softer voice when close to the play. Verbalize more aggressively when play is

farther away. Facial expressions can be calmer during a 'quiet' game. A more business-like demeanor is needed in a hard-fought game.

2. Excellent topic to be discussed in pre-game meeting.
  - a. In general, it is better to let the official closest to the play call the infraction. **Exception:** if the official farther from the play is absolutely sure that the other official did not see an infraction. For a frozen puck, the sole responsibility is with the official closest to the play. Use eye contact and/or facial expression to indicate to partner you may need help.
  - b. Linesperson/Referee: make Referee aware of potential problems – ex. "heads up behind play." Referee/Linesperson: if it is necessary to correct Linesperson on icing or offside – Be certain Linesperson did not see play (ex. no signal by Linesperson. Be absolutely certain an error occurred)
3. a. With a potential restraining infraction, the Referee may wait for the outcome of the play to see if a change of possession or loss of a scoring opportunity occurs.
  - b. With a violent infraction, it is important to make a quick and decisive call: Helps to sell the call. Alerts non-offending team that a penalty is being called, which may prevent retaliation. Then use time while skating to Penalty Bench to decide if infraction is a Minor or a Major

## Judgment Review

1. a. Officials are "teachers."
  - b. Officials are "teachers" and "game managers." Game managers manage the progress of the game in a safe and fair environment while using good judgment.
  - c. Officials are "game managers."
2. **Loss of a scoring opportunity:** player hooked driving to the net
 

**Injury potential:** stick contact to the head of an opponent

**Blatantly obvious:** shoot puck out of rink during a stoppage

**Immediate change of possession or advantage gained:** puck carrier hooked and loses puck to opponent.
3. **Standards previously set by the official:** maintain standard throughout game. It is usually better to set a tight standard early and loosen up later if play dictates that.
 

**Teams involved in the game:** an experienced official will allow teams to dictate the flow of the game within the rules.
4. Infractions that occur within the enforcement standard should be called under all circumstances. Should send a message to participants and spectators. Sets a standard for game. Must meet one of the four penalty criteria.
  5. a. Aggressive fouls are often injury-potential infractions. They often have little to do with the flow of the game, and they usually are attempts to intimidate an

opponent. Examples: slashing, high-sticking, cross-checking, checking from behind.

- b. Restraining fouls are less serious infractions. They often affect the flow of the game. Examples: hooking, holding, tripping.
  - c. Aggressive fouls are usually black and white infractions. The only question may be whether these fouls are minors or a more severe penalty. Restraining fouls are usually less obvious and may serve a purpose. They can often serve as an indication of the official's judgment. A tight standard on restraining fouls early in a game can reduce frustrations by players.
6. The ability to penalize, on a regular basis, those infractions that meet one of the four penalty criteria.
- Factors** – Calling a similar situation: The same way within the same game. In similar games the same way. Within the same game the same way by one official. Within the same game from official to official. From game to game by the same official. From game to game by different officials

## Altercations Review

1. Know the history – be aware of the relationship between teams and between individual players. Have these teams played before? What type of style does each team play? Are there players on each team who have personal rivalries? What is at stake in this game? **HUSTLE** – get to a potential problem before it becomes a full-blown altercation. Know situations that can lead to problems – running the goalie, contact in front of the net, an injured player as the result of an infraction, trash talking, restraining fouls, lopsided score. Communicate with your partner(s).
2. Linespersons should: Use techniques described in the Intermediate Manual. Use force only when necessary. If uncertain as to whether a player is being penalized, take the player to the box first and correct it before play resumes if necessary. Be aware of players leaving the benches during an altercation. Be aware of other infractions that occur during the altercation. When asked to do so, provide information to the Referee in a brief and concise manner. Once everything is resolved, gets the game going as soon as possible.
3. The Referee should: If the instigator rule applies, use it. Position yourself so you can see the altercation(s) and both benches. Monitor the players not involved in the altercation – prevent further altercations and prevent players coming off the benches. Be firm in handling these players. Get help from the Linespersons or the Off-Ice officials if appropriate. Verbalize with players and with your partners to help separate players. Use calming rather than threatening phrases. After players are separated, verbalize to the Linespersons where players should be taken. Use your memo (riot) pad for multiple penalties. Only get physically involved

when absolutely necessary: injury potential, when you can easily stop a second altercation. Be decisive and efficient when sorting out and handling penalties: Ask partner(s) specific questions; be specific when giving instructions to your Linespersons. Explain the penalty situations to the Captains briefly; summarize the 'bottom line' for the Captains (who is shorthanded for how long). Get play started as soon as possible.

### Off-Ice Officials and Their Role Review

1. The Official Scorer: has access to video replay; award assists; has final say on awarding goals and assists; serves as a communications link between officials and team management. Video Replay Coordinator: has access to television replay; will advise Referee in cases of disputed goals; communicates with the Referee via telephone at scorer's table. Commercial Coordinator: coordinates TV timeouts; communicates time-out procedures with on-ice officials.

### Post-Game Duties & Responsibilities Review

1. Let the Supervisor control the conversation; when the Supervisor asks what you think of the game before providing feedback, answer with confidence and be realistic; ask questions while being courteous; be positive; expect that different Supervisors have different personalities; refrain from disagreeing or arguing with the Supervisor; take what you have learned and apply it to future assignment.
2. Develop mutual respect and cooperation with the Supervisor; you must assume that the Supervisor is offering an objective view of your performance; you must assume that you have some areas where you can improve; remember that you both share the ultimate goal – improvement of the official; compromise is a key to successful critique – you will probably have to be the first to bend; take notes; accept blame for legitimate mistakes; listen attentively; ask questions; sincere intelligent approach to criticism will lend itself to improvement; realize that some Supervisors are paid employees of a League, and so your attitude with them can be very important to your advancement
3. Avoid establishments that are frequented by coaches and players; avoid wearing USA Hockey and/or League logos; avoid drawing unnecessary attention to yourself as an official; limit discussions with spectators about the game; avoid criticizing other officials, players, coaches or administrators. Behave professionally at all times.

### Hockey Officiating: The Mental Game Review

1. a. Be consistent with the time you take between observing an event and assessing a penalty for that event. Quick calls may appear questionable and slow calls may appear unconvincing.

- b. May have to wait for everything that could happen on a play to actually happen as a double-check on a possible penalty situation. Observe the reactions of players involved in the play as a double-check on a possible penalty situation.
- c. Officials who judge events on their relevance and not only by their occurrence will tend to make fewer mistakes. Officials who try to anticipate the occurrence tend to make more mistakes because the actual event may not occur as anticipated. Admit a mistake when it does occur.
- d. Bureaucratic response: a literal interpretation of the rule(s) involved. Common sense response: an application of the rule(s) which could or could not result in a penalty call. Justice response: a stance that supports the spectators' demands for consistency. Order response: a stance that upholds the Referee's obligation to maintain control over the game.
- e. Avoid having next decision influenced by reactions of spectators/coaches/players to previous decision(s). "Act" as if you are not affected by adverse reactions to your previous calls. If you appear to be rattled, the negative pressure will probably continue.
- f. Slumps are bound to happen. They are characterized by self-doubt or a lack of confidence. Taking a break or being involved in a 'big' game can help you break out of a slump.
- g. **Imagery:** recreating in your mind the experiences you have had or experiences you would like to have. Example – visualizing a crucial penalty call.

**Attribution:** the need to explain why we succeed or why we fail Internal attribution – involves factors under the direct control of the individual.

Example – "I did not put forth enough effort." Internal attributions can be healthy because the official accepts responsibility.

**External attribution:** involves factors outside the realm of direct control by the individual.

Example – "My partner wasn't very good." External attributions can have a negative effect on the individual because blame is placed on factors that the individual cannot control.

- h. Steps to successful goal-setting: Do a "Self-Survey;" rate present officiating skills and development; rate yourself on the mental aspects of officiating and your physical skills; rate yourself from 1 to 10 in each area. Setting goals: make them realistic, yet challenging; state them as specifically as possible; emphasize short-term goals; set goals that you can control; choose areas where you rated yourself as a 5 or less. Define your goals: clearly and concisely write out each goal. Write a plan of action: write out the steps, actions, routines and schedules needed to implement each goal. Make a commitment: pledge to yourself that your goals will be achieved. Get worked up: emotions

such as desire and enthusiasm help generate energy that can result in positive actions. Go for it: every day, mentally picture yourself actually doing the things that will help you achieve your goals.

2. Concentrate and focus on game events. Identify the important calls of each game and react accordingly. Anticipate the sequence of events as they are likely to occur. Recognize the different range of events that occur at different levels. Judge an event on its relevance, not on its occurrence. Allow uncertain events to establish the rhythm of response. Maintain a certain amount of arrogance without becoming overconfident. Handle pre-game jitters as a way to promote preparedness.

### **Communication With Players/Coaches Review**

1. Can be effective if used as a quick one-liner to ease tension. Remain cool and calm on the inside even if you have to be tough and aggressive on the outside.
2. Injecting humor – may not always be appropriate; never poke fun at any individual player or coach.
3. In tough game – give more ‘commands’ and less ‘requests.’ Example – “keep your sticks down rather than “watch your sticks.” Establish a physical presence at stoppages by moving closer to players and ‘standing tall.’ Use facial expressions to your advantage by creating a mad look on your face to let players know

you are unhappy with their actions. Be less willing to discuss issue. Use body language that asserts authority. Example – using a hand gesture to motion a player to the penalty box. Do not use this aggressive behavior above all the time

### **Community Relations and Involvement Review**

1. Their expertise and experience is a valuable resource for the still developing hockey participants.
2. **Local** – share your knowledge with coaches and players; become a mentor for younger officials; continue to work at the younger levels; promote the USA Hockey officiating program; make officials aware of opportunities to advance; take an active leadership role; do community charity work  
**National** – become an officiating program instructor; become an officiating program administrator; serve on an officiating program committee

### **Role of the Supervisor Review**

1. Develop a mutual respect and cooperation with the supervisor. Be willing to compromise. Always assume you have areas where you can improve. Take notes. Accept blame for legitimate mistakes. Ask questions that may not have been answered and take all comments to heart and make the effort to improve in those areas.



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