

## **HOCKEY RULE INTERPRETATIONS**

### **USA Hockey Affiliation**

**QUESTION:** Are the practices and games during the season considered sanctioned events by USA Hockey? There is some confusion if they are. The rink that we play at requires that all participants are members of USA Hockey. However, if a player is injured in a non-sanctioned event, the supplemental insurance provided by USA Hockey could not be utilized.

**INTERPRETATION:** Simply put, no, high school practices and games are not USA Hockey programs nor sanctioned events. High School hockey players and their programs are under the insurance coverage of their school. There is no need for USA Hockey sanctioning for any high school program. There is no requirement by the WIAA for high school players or teams to be associated with USA Hockey.

### **Mouthguards**

**QUESTION:** Is there a “warning” in a WIAA hockey game for not using a mouth-guard?

**INTERPRETATION:** NFHS Rule 3-4-4 indicates: All players, including goalkeepers, shall wear and have properly inserted into their mouth during the course of play a tooth and mouth protector.

**PENALTY: INITIAL VIOLATION – TEAM WARNING:** And, offending player (except goalkeeper) shall be immediately replaced on the ice. An offending goalkeeper shall be immediately provided a tooth and mouth protector.  
**SUBSEQUENT TEAM VIOLATIONS – MISCONDUCT**

WIAA Ice Hockey officials are required to strictly enforce this safety regulation.

### **Game Disqualifications**

**QUESTION:** As you will note on my report, I told the coach that the game disqualification assessed in the JV game meant that the player could not participate in the varsity game that immediately followed the JV game. Several of my fellow officials and I have discussed this suspension and we are divided as to whether the suspension should be the varsity game that was immediately after the jv game or the next regularly-scheduled jv game. Can you give us your opinion? I told the coach that I would seek a rule interpretation.

**INTERPRETATION:** When disqualifications occur in JV games, I always advise not allowing the player to participate in the varsity game that follows. This is always safest for eligibility purposes.

After receiving the game disqualification report, I review the situations of each player with the Athletic Director involved. Almost always, the players will also be required to miss the next JV game as well.

## WIAA Hockey Teams vs. Non-School Teams

**QUESTION:** Does WIAA prohibit U19 girls hockey teams, affiliated with WAHA, playing against WIAA high school age teams in a tournament during the WIAA girls high school season? I ask because there are two teams, U19, that may be interested in playing in the tourney.

**INTERPRETATION:** WIAA regulations do allow member school programs to compete against non-school programs so long as the following criteria are met:

1. NFHS/WIAA regulations are followed.
2. WIAA officials are used.
3. School administrators approve of the contest.

Although WIAA programs may not use 8th graders and below on high school teams, nor players who have completed their high school careers and those that have graduated, so long as teams are age and size appropriate as determined by school administrators, grades/ages outside of high school can be used by non-school programs.

## Photos and Videotaping

**QUESTION:** What I'm wondering is if I can have someone take photos during a game and use those as a teaching tool between periods?

**INTERPETATION:** There are really two parts to this question:

Can pictures/video be reviewed and used as teaching tools between periods?

Answer: Yes, allowed.

Can a photographer be in the team box taking these pictures/videos? Answer:

No, photographers need to be located either in an allowed location within the facility or in the spectator seating area for precautionary/safety related reasons—too easy for someone taking photos/video in the team box to be hit by a player, stick or puck while filming in the team box.

## Hockey for Hunger

**QUESTION:** I received this email about a hockey fundraiser and am checking to be sure the WIAA has approved this.

**INTERPETATION:** Thanks for the note. Hockey for Hunger does not violate any WIAA regulations. It is a local decision whether to participate or not. School teams are able to accept the prizes involved.

## Equipment & Uniforms

**QUESTION:** I was officiating a high school varsity boy's hockey game tonight, when a unique situation occurred. During the second period, a player on Team A shot the puck which shattered Team B's goalkeeper's throat protector. The puck rebounded directly to a Team A player who shot and scored a goal. I

**allowed the goal and had the goalkeeper replace his throat protector before the game proceeded. The Madison Memorial coaches and players argued that we should have stopped play because of the broken throat protector. In my response, I explained my interpretation of Rule 3, Section 3, Article 5 which states, "If a goalkeeper's mask or helmet is displaced, play shall be immediately stopped." Since the goalkeeper's helmet and mask remained intact, I allowed play to continue. In my explanation, I described how we would not stop play for required goalkeeper equipment falling out like a dental guard, nor would play be stopped for a dropped glove or blocker. I agree with their concern for safety; however, I did not feel I had the authority to stop play given the rules prescribed above. I recognize the emphasis on proper protective equipment for preventing injuries, especially as outlined on Page 52 in the comments on the rules. Please provide some guidance on how to handle this situation in the future.**

**INTERPRETATION:** It is clear this was a unique circumstance that rarely occurs. However, when it does take place, the "flapper" is considered to be part of the helmet. Once an official identifies the "flapper" to be broken, it becomes a broken/displaced, required piece of equipment. For future consideration, utilizing NFHS Rule 3-5-3, we can apply this regulation and shut down play immediately. If a goal is scored, it can be removed from the scoreboard as the flapper breaking and the official recognizing the broken flapper did occur prior to the scoring of the goal in this instance.

**QUESTION:** **After warm-ups, the players went to the locker rooms and they cut the ice as normal, but when Team A players came back out they all left their helmets on the bench and skated around, then down to the goal line for introductions and the national anthem. We went over and talked to the Team A coach about it and he said they had been doing it for the last three years (I don't remember them ever doing it). He even said he received a misconduct penalty once for it. It's a clear violation of the rules and liability issue as well so I felt it had to be reported.**

**INTERPRETATION:** First, I have contacted the school administration at Team A's High School to inform them of the violation of NFHS Rule 3-4-3 that occurred when the team skated to the goal line without wearing required equipment (helmets). I have asked school administrators to correct this immediately. They have already responded and will be working with their Head Coach to make certain players do not enter any rink without their helmets on.

This is a situation where the best officiating is preventative officiating that keeps actions like this from taking place. Once recognition of players placing their helmets on the benches occurred, this is the time to get over to that team's box and keep them in the box until helmets are back on. If members of a team happen to get on the ice, get the first skaters back to the box and get their helmets on them. If the team gets out on the ice, including the goalie, assess a MINOR penalty to the goalie. This requires the team to play one skater down at the start of the game causing the violating team to start the game one skater down. If the goalie wears his/her helmet, assess one MISCONDUCT penalty. This allows the team to start the game five on five, and normally the weakest skater is placed in the penalty box.

**QUESTION:** Can we allow a local provider to make formed mouthguards for our hockey players at a reduced price?

**INTERPRETATION:** A reduced price for formed mouthguards can only be allowed if the mouthguards are offered to all students in the high school, not just to players on the hockey team or on any high school sport team.

Amateur status regulations indicate: “A student shall be determined to be in violation if he/she: accepts, receives and/or directs to another, reimbursement or award in any form of (a) salary, (b) cash, (c) merchandise of any kind or amount or (d) share of game or season proceeds, for achievement in athletics.” When only student-athletes are allowed to purchase a mouthguard at a reduced price, or any item for that matter, can only be viewed as receiving a reimbursement for achievement in athletics. Consequently, this must be identified as an eligibility violation if allowed.

**QUESTION:** Do hockey uniforms have to have numbers on their sleeves?

**INTERPRETATION:** Yes, NFHS Rule 2-1-2 indicates that all players shall wear numbered uniforms. It is required that all players be numbered with at least 10-inch (25.4 cm) high Gothic, colored numbers on the back of their jerseys and the same numbers at least 4 inches (10.16 cm) in height on both sleeves of the jersey. The color of the numbers shall contrast with the color of the jersey.

**QUESTION:** Do ice hockey sweaters have to be “white” when a team is the home team during the regular season?

**INTERPRETATION:** NFHS Situation 2-1-2b indicates: “The home team’s jerseys are light blue and the visiting team’s jerseys are dark blue. **RULING:** As long as the officials can readily differentiate players of opposing teams, this is permissible. The home team should preferably wear white jerseys, but light non-white colors are permitted.

During the WIAA tournament series, 2011 WIAA regulations require the SECOND school alphabetically to wear light colored jerseys.

**QUESTION:** Years ago, goaltenders had to have a neck protector under their gear separate from the chest protector. Do they still need this?

**INTERPRETATION:** NFHS Rule 3-3-1 now reads as follow: “Required equipment for goalkeepers shall include gloves, skates, stick, protective full face mask, flapper-style throat protector, leg pads and helmet with chin strap.” The regulation goes on to indicate the flapper-style throat protection must be separate, commercially manufactured, unaltered and properly attached to the helmet or face mask.

Simply put, the flapper-style throat protector has now replaced the neck protector. Neck protectors can be worn; however, a flapper-style throat protector must also be worn.

#### **Nine Position Face-off Procedures**

**QUESTION:** Where is the face off held if a penalty box official allows a player to leave the box early?

**INTERPRETATION:** As soon as an official recognizes a player has left the penalty box early, play should be shut down immediately as nothing legal can happen. The player needs

to return to the penalty box to complete the penalty. The face-off occurs at the spot closest to the location where the puck was last legally played.

**QUESTION:** **Where is the face off held if a hand pass is called on Team A?**

**INTERPRETATION:** NFHS Rule 6-12-8 now indicates: "The puck shall be faced off at the nearest face-off spot, providing the least territorial advantage to the team causing the stoppage, in the zone where the puck was last fairly played, which is where the puck was last fairly in contact with a player or that player's stick, unless otherwise provided in for in these rules when (j) puck is grasped by hand (not a hand pass) and play is stopped."

#### Four Penalties in One Game

**QUESTION:** **After receiving four penalties in a game, must the player receiving these four penalties be removed from the remainder of the contest?**

**INTERPRETATION :** Yes, WIAA Season Regulations, 15., b., Any player receiving a total of four penalties (minor, major, or misconduct) in a game shall be removed from participation for the balance of that game. This does not include bench penalties served by the player or violations resulting in penalty shots. The ejection is not considered a game misconduct or game disqualification.

#### Number of Required Officials

**QUESTION:** **Can a JV game be officiated by 2 officials, or does there need to be 3 to start the game? I'm looking in the NFHS rules book and it only says that a game shall be officiated by either a two or three official system. I know you need 3 for a varsity game. Can you clarify for me?**

**INTERPRETATION:** WIAA Sr. High School Handbook, page 52, indicates—"Hockey (3)—Referee, Assistant Referee, and Linesman—at all levels of competition."

Three (3) WIAA registered ice hockey officials are required in order for an ice hockey game to begin.

#### Eligibility

**QUESTION:** **Is it within the rules to allow an 8th grade student to practice with us? He is a goalie and we have only one goalie now and could use another for practice.**

**INTERPRETATION:** While taking "time and turns" away from students already "in high school" would never be recommended, here, WIAA rules do not prevent middle level students in your district from "practicing" with the high school team, if that's what your administration approves of. Because of ramifications across all your schools programs, this ought to be an administrative determination, perhaps even school board/governing body approved so as to protect school administration, but not a coach's prerogative.

I would presume this to be an opportunity your district would make available then to all the district's middle level students with the same circumstances and interest in such an opportunity. We have found grave unhappiness and concern to exist in parents and student-athletes of a feeder program when only certain middle level students are provided the opportunity to practice/work out with a high school team. It will be the school administration answering questions should concerns

develop.

As is the case in all sports, would suggest developing another goalie from existing student-athletes on the team.

**QUESTION:**

**I have been approached by a few of the players that were cut from the team that would be interested in practicing with the JV team but not playing in any games. Our coach is very interested in having the guys come out and have a red shirt type of season where they can work on their skills and become stronger skaters but not play in any games. We would also outline with these guys the team rules and the expectations for the season. They could also participate with the team as managers or assist the team with stats or other needed activities. Is there a problem with this at all? We would discuss it with all the current players as well to make sure that they understand what the program is all about.**

**What do you think?**

**INTERPRETATION:**

Past history in ice hockey has been to “cut” student-athletes and then they are allowed to return to non-school (WAHA) teams. Keep in mind that any student-athlete who is “cut” can be asked to return to the school team one time during the season. If a player returns to the school team and then competes on a non-school team, they are no longer allowed to compete with the school team. In the meantime, a student-athlete can be practicing and/or competing with a non-school team.

If a school wishes to keep players they have “cut” and practice with them, the school is allowed to do so. There are no limits during the regular season to the number of players on a school team’s bench. The school could develop an additional schedule for them if they so choose to do so and are able to gain governing body support. Having student-athletes only practice with/against the varsity team can develop into difficult situations and may be an issue that school administrators want to think very carefully about.

In the email, the term “red-shirting” is used. Please keep in mind there is no “red-shirting” for high school student-athletes. Each student-athlete has four years of eligibility beginning with the start of their freshmen year. You may wish to review WIAA Rules at a Glance, III., B.

Regarding players remaining as managers, statisticians, etc., school programs are certainly allowed to have student-athletes handle these positions. Keep in mind, they are limited and during the tournament series do have limitations to the number of coaches, managers, and players allowed in the box.

**QUESTION:**

**My son would like to play hockey but the school has no team. Can he play on a different high school team?**

**INTERPRETATION:**

Unless a co-op is established or if the student is still in 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade, the options that now exist for this situation is for a family to make a full and complete move into a new community, apply for open enrollment, request to pay tuition

where the school in that community has ice hockey or play on nonschool programs.

Parents need to contact their school's Athletic Director in these situations if they have a student in 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade or attending a Jr. High School or a Middle School.

**QUESTION:**

**Before hockey began, I had a 9th grade player email me and ask my opinion to whether she should play high school hockey or play WAHA U-14 level girls hockey. Because the U-14 team had a returning 11th grade goal tender and another 11th grader who showed interest in the back-up position, I recommended that she play at the U-14 level. We started high school hockey a week ago today, and the potential back-up goalie has informed me she does not want to play goalie leaving my team with just the one.**

**The U-14 player has already begun the U-14 season and has already played 2 games. Is it too late to invite the U-14 player to the high school team? If so, do I need WIAA approval to do so?**

**INTERPRETATION:**

WIAA provisions require students who were a part of the team last season may not delay reporting 'this' season and must be present on day one of practice.

As you describe this situation, with student being a 9th grader, we see no reason she couldn't come out for the school team at this point in time.

Obviously, once she reports to the school team she can no longer continue competition with the club team until the school season's over.

### Out-of-State Tournaments

**QUESTION:**

**Our hockey team is competing in the SWANS CUP later this month in Minnesota. Do I need to fill out a waiver to do this with the WIAA?**

**INTERPRETATION:**

Simply put, YES, the WIAA office does need to provide a waiver to any WIAA school team that participates in this tournament. There have been questions in past years regarding the actual "school" that is hosting this tournament and sanctioning issues associated with this tournament.

### Fundraisers

**QUESTION:**

**Can receipts from a fundraiser be used to reduce student fees for hockey players?**

**INTERPRETATION:**

Governing bodies of school provide approval for student fees assessed to hockey players and all other student-athletes. Monies received from a fundraiser must be "gifted" to the school district and accepted by the school district via a school's acceptance policies. Once these funds are accepted by the school, the governing body can determine new, lower student fees for all student-athletes participating in a sport.

A student-athlete receiving a reduced student participation fee equal to the amount the student raised during a fundraising campaign is a violation of WIAA Amateur Status regulations that can jeopardize a student-athlete's eligibility.

**QUESTION:** We would like to do a fundraiser of some sort with our hockey team for a local cancer campaign. Can we start a program where spectators contribute a certain dollar amount for every goal we score?

**INTERPRETATION:** In simplest terms – “no”.

The WIAA’s Board of Control and the other advisory committees which guide the Board, have taken a clear, firm position opposing any/all fundraisers which are based either on performance within a competition and/or based upon the outcome of a competition.

Both from the sportsmanship perspective as well as for the “flavor” of “gaming/gambling” which accompany fundraisers based on performance in competition/outcomes of games... our membership has zero interest in embracing this style of fund raiser.

Fund raisers based on – yards rushed, takedowns, shots on goal, goals scored...freethrows/assists, etc., ...etc., any/all of these (and others) are not acceptable/appropriate school/program fundraisers when connected to performance in a competition with another school.

Activities like collecting nonperishable goods, raffles, shoveling snow, getting groceries, running errands, raking a yard, etc., for a donation or a specific price are all acceptable programs for a high school team to be involved.

#### Scrimmages

**QUESTION:** Can a school hockey program scrimmage a WAHA non-school hockey team?

**INTERPRETATION:** Yes, a nonschool program can be allowed to scrimmage against a WIAA member school program. Keep in mind that both programs must identify the event as a scrimmage. WIAA Ice Hockey programs can only be allowed one scrimmage.

**QUESTION:** Can the scorebook and/or scoreboard be used during scrimmages?

**INTERPRETATION:** No, neither the scorebook nor the scoreboard can be used during a scrimmage. WIAA Winter Season Regulations, page 23, 4., a., (4).

If a scorebook and/or scoreboard is used during a scrimmage, the scrimmage must be counted as one of the 20 contests for the school team’s involved.

#### Number of Allowed Games

**QUESTION:** If we do not fill our entire 20-game hockey schedule and get knocked out of the regional in the first round can we play games until the end of the state tournament?

**INTERPRETATION:** WIAA Ice Hockey teams can continue to practice after being defeated in the WIAA tournament series through the completion of the State Tournament on Saturday, March 6, 2010. As far as games are concerned, only rescheduled games that have been postponed can be played following the start of the tournament series.

**QUESTION:** **Can high school hockey teams play two games in one day?**

**INTERPRETATION:** Yes, WIAA and NFHS language remains silent regarding two games in one day. This means it is allowed. However, with the following reservations:

We are concerned about student-athletes being overexposed by playing in two or more games in one day. In the WIAA Individual Participation Limitations we do indicate “it is the responsibility of a coach to be particularly concerned about overexposing students to the point of adversely affecting their health and safety.”

This was one of the reasons for allowing two multi-games to be up to three games over a six day period. So that student-athletes were not overexposed to the point where they might lose emotional/behavioral control or be physically drained from too many games in too short a period of time (i.e., two or more games in one day, games played on consecutive days, etc.) without adequate recovery time.

Also, two games in one day can be identified as one multi-game on a school teams schedule. If a third game is played in this tournament, it can also be counted with these other games as one multi-game so long as there are not two other multi-games already identified in your schedule.

**QUESTION:** **Is there a limit to the number of contests a hockey player who plays both JV and Varsity can compete in during the regular season?**

**INTERPRETATION:** No, WIAA regulations remain silent regarding the number of contests during the regular season. However, WIAA Season Regulations, page 23, 7., indicates, “It is the responsibility of a coach to be particularly concerned about overexposing students to the point of adversely affecting their health and safety. It is highly recommended that coaches who use players at more than one level of competition document the number of periods played for each individual.”

**QUESTION:** **Doesn't the WIAA five period per day regulation prevent two hockey games from being played in one day?**

**INTERPRETATION:** No, the language related to playing in five periods in one day is for contests at two different levels. In other words, if a player goes from the JV to the Varsity level, they may only compete in a maximum of five periods on that day.

As the regulation reads, coaches are also reminded that it is the responsibility of the coach to be particularly concerned about the overexposing students to the point of adversely affecting their health and safety. It is highly recommended that coaches who use players at more than one level of competition document the number of periods played for each individual.

#### **Air Horn Blown After a Score**

**QUESTION:** **We have blown an air horn located outside the rink and the south end and opposite the spectator seating when we scored a goal in our varsity hockey games. The question is: Are we in violation of the rules or abusing the rules by doing this only for our home team?**

**INTERPRETATION:** During the regular season, matters of neutrality for contests are the responsibility of the conference (if a conference game) or the host school (if a non-conference game). During the WIAA Tournament Series, the WIAA has responsibility for matters like this.

In ice hockey, the use of “Fog Horns” whether recorded or live has become quite popular during recent years. The problem with the use of “Fog Horns” is that a minor official, who is to be as neutral as possible, is usually responsible for blowing the foghorn. The WIAA informs host schools during our tournament series that if a foghorn is to be blown following a goal for the host school, it must also be blown following the scoring of a goal by the visiting team. Otherwise, it should not be blown at all.

During the regular season, this is a regulation that many schools and conferences have applied to their school contests. Many times, because there are also non-school contests played at rinks, this is misapplied.

### Warm-ups

**QUESTION:** **During the pre-game warm ups, a team moves the goal from its correct position to a spot along the boards half way between the goal line and the blue line. They place one goalie in front of that goal, the other goalie at a similar spot on the other side of the ice, and play a three-on-three mini scrimmage. Is this acceptable? My view is that it isn't. There is no protective netting in front of the seating area for one, so a tipped shot could go straight up into the stands. It seems dangerous to me. Could you clarify?**

**INTERPRETATION:** Most rinks now provide netting around the goal areas. This netting is not provided in many rinks around the entire rink. When a rink does not have netting encircling the entire rink or when a warm-up procedure described above is used without netting behind the goal, obvious liability/risk issues can easily develop.

This is a local-school-team-coach decision; however, the best advice is not to move the goal to an area where there is no netting provided behind an area where student-athletes are taking shots.

### Ice Hockey Divisions

**QUESTION:** **I'm interested in getting information concerning the possible division of hockey teams based on school enrollment. It seems every other sport is more evenly and fairly divided based on school enrollment. Hockey, a very physical sport, has small schools facing huge school populations. This seems unsafe and unfair. When will WIAA make this necessary change?**

**INTERPRETATION:** In WIAA Ice Hockey we currently have 93 boys ice hockey school teams and 33 girls ice hockey school teams. In order for divisions to be identified, we need to have 96 school teams for consideration of two divisions to occur. Past precedent with other boy's sports require the 96 school teams in order for divisional considerations to be made.

With the current economic situation, attaining additional ice hockey programs in our schools may be a struggle. This is something we continue to monitor. We are hopeful schools in Wisconsin continue to consider an interest in developing an ice hockey program. We view a two-divisional format as a positive move for WIAA member schools.

### Shoot-outs

**QUESTION:** Our son played a conference hockey game last night. At the end of regulation play the score was tied at 3-3. The teams then played one regulation overtime period with neither team scoring. The referees then continued the contest with a three-man shoot-out. Could you please tell me if the rules for WIAA hockey have changed to include shootouts to determine the winner of a contest? In the past both teams stats reflected a tie and the goaltenders were not assessed any goals allowed. I was unable to find this info on the website other than in reference to the tournament procedure.

**INTERPRETATION:** WIAA Season Regulations for Ice Hockey specifically indicate, 15., f., pg. 24, "For regular season tournaments an alternate tie-breaking procedure may be determined by the host school. However, any hockey game where an alternate tie-breaking procedure is used (not including a sudden-victory during an eight-minute NFHS overtime period) is to be listed as a tie on a team's season record."

I have been informed this was a conference game and not a special tournament the teams were playing and there are no conference regulations allowing a shootout. Consequently, the same regulation does need to be applied and the game officially is identified as a tie. Both teams' records will need to reflect a tie and for seeding purposes for the WIAA tournament, this game will need to be identified as a tie.

### Captains

**QUESTION:** My hockey coaches have asked me how many captains they can have? Or is there is any restriction to how many?

**INTERPRETATION:** NFHS Rule 2-2-1 indicates: "Each team shall designate prior to the game any combination of captains or alternates, not to exceed three." It is important to note that in NFHS Rule 2-2-1a, it is indicated: "No goalkeeper may have on-ice captain's privileges."