

# **Advanced Referee Judgement**

**Hockey Canada, USAH,  
Pro Hockey, IIHF**



# What are the 4 criteria of a penalty?

- 1 - Change of possession
- 2 - Loss of scoring opportunity
- 3 - Blatantly obvious
- 4 - Recklessness / injury potential



# Types of Penalties

**“OUT OF THE BOX”** **Never a penalty**

**“THE GRAY AREA”** **Sometimes a penalty**

**“IN THE BOX”**  
**Always a penalty**



# Levels of Judgement

## **Never a penalty:**

- Stick on puck
- Legal body checks
- Angling / rub-outs
- Competitive contact

## **Black and White calls:**

- Icing / Offsides
- Goals
- Puck out of play
- Face-off locations

## **Sometimes a penalty:**

- Stick fouls
- Interference
- Roughing

## **Always a penalty:**

- Flagrant and obvious
- Injury potential
- Bodychecks given with purpose of intimidation
- Fouls that cause change of possession
- Fouls that cause loss of legitimate scoring opportunity



# Levels of Judgement

**Standards of play from USAH,  
Hockey Canada, NCAA and Pro  
Hockey**

- Reward skilled players by not allowing opponents to gain a competitive advantage using illegal or intimidating tactics





# **Consistency**

**Ability to make the same judgement call instinctively throughout each individual game, game-to-game, and all season long.**

- Achieved from game experience, knowledge of the rule-book, and understanding the decision criteria of what is and what isn't a penalty
- Consistency is one of the key qualities that makes an official stand out from their peers
- It's the pattern of penalties and enforcement standards that the referee sets to show/tell the players, coaches, and fans what the referee will and will not allow to happen during the course of a game

# Setting the Standard

**Making the first call of the game sets the tone for the rest of the game.**

- With the first call, do your best to make an “Always a penalty” call
- Or call that fits “Change of possession” or “Loss of scoring opportunity”
- It’s always better to start tight and loosen the standard as the game goes on than to start loose then tighten the standard



# **Setting the Standard**

**Throughout the game take the temperature, assess how the game is going and adjust.**

- If you have a game that's going up and down the ice, the players are playing hard, and there is no need to interject as the referee, stay out of it
- If the temperature of the game starts to rise, take a few impact penalties or after the whistle penalties
- ALWAYS take a differential if a game is starting to get hot. Taking the differential gets the message to the players and will cool the game off.



# **Communication**

**Being a strong communicator can get you out of trouble as games progress.**

- Building a rapport with coaches and players so that they know what your expectations are
- Sometimes it's better to use your voice and talk guys through something than to call a penalty; give warnings first
- Knowing who will listen and who won't. Make "friends" with the goalies and the goons, as those guys help keep the temperature of the game down

# **Communication**

## **Going to the benches:**

- Avoid going into the hornet's nest when the coach or team is pissed off. In some cases you will have to do it, but if the opportunity to wait is there, go get the puck down, let them cool off then go at the next stoppage or talk at the end of the period
- If the coach is standing up on the boards or bench, make them get down and be eye level with you. Go to the opposite end of the bench, make them come to you and get them away from their players

## **Bench Minors:**

- If all else fails, bench the coach. Don't be afraid to do it.



# **Hope vs Courage**

**Never put yourself in a position where you have to Hope something happens or goes your way.**

- “I hope they don’t score here”
- “I hope I made the right call”
- “I hope he/she doesn’t yell at me”

**Have the Courage to call it**

- Bad face-off, blow it down and do it again
- Goalie pushes net off in last 2 minutes of game, call the Penalty Shot
- The integrity of the game is everything and having courage will maintain that integrity

# Artist vs Scientist

## The Artist

“Paint a picture”

Referees who feel their way through a game. Maybe they don't know the rulebook cover to cover, but they know how to manage a game and paint a beautiful picture of how they think the game should be played.

## The Scientist

“Follow the rulebook to a T”

Referees who call the game exactly how the rulebook is written. Black and white, almost robotic. Calling games this way is not a bad thing, but makes it seem like you have no feel for the game and are afraid to bring your personality onto the ice.

Find a balance between Artist and Scientist.  
Bring your personality with you on the ice, know the rulebook well enough to get you through any situation that you might encounter, but also know you have options on how to apply the rulebook.

**Balance**



# Closing Remarks

- Be humble
- Be coachable
- Learn how to take evaluations
- Remember it's not personal
- Always learn
- Watch video, there is always something you can learn from watching, and make sure to apply what you have learned to your specific rule set, HC, USAH, etc.

