



2024 NCAA Ice Hockey Rules – Proposals and Editorial Adjustments

Comment Period

Proposal #	Rule	Proposed Language and Rationale
1	<u>11.1</u>	<u>Loss of Goalkeeper Equipment:</u> Adjust this rule to include a goalkeeper’s skate blade that becomes damaged or removed to be treated like the loss of other equipment, with the exception of the helmet. In these situations, any impending scoring chance would be allowed to continue until completed and play will be stopped at the next opportunity. Rationale: Clarity and consistency. This aligns the loss of a skate blade with other areas of the goalkeeper’s equipment.
2	<u>15.2</u>	<u>Goal Scored:</u> Adjust the rules for delayed penalties so that if a goal is scored during the calling of a delayed minor penalty, the scoring of the goal nullifies the minor penalty enforcement. The current rule is to enforce the minor penalty regardless of the outcome during the delayed penalty. Rationale: The committee believes this rule should align with most other levels of hockey. While it was an interesting and unique NCAA rule, the committee believes the so-called “double jeopardy” aspect of this rule should be removed.
3	<u>15.3</u>	<u>Calling of a Penalty – Short-handed Team:</u> This is a an adjustment in situations where multiple penalties are called on one team. The proposal is to change to have the player entering the penalty box be released first if the opposing team scores a goal during a power play. Previously, the player released from the penalty box was the penalty that caused the team to become shorthanded. Rationale: This simplifies enforcement procedures in multiple penalty situations and aligns with many other levels of ice hockey.

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4	<u>15.4</u>	<u>Faceoff Location:</u> To add language making it clear that when a penalty is being enforced, the non-offending team has the choice of which offensive zone faceoff location the ensuing faceoff will be conducted. This does not apply during coincidental minor penalties (both teams penalized). Rationale: Clarity and consistency with other areas of the rules.
5	<u>29</u>	<u>Supplemental Discipline:</u> In cases where a disqualification penalty is enforced, a conference may appeal to the NCAA secretary-rules editor and national coordinator of officials (men’s or women’s) to review the penalty for a possible reduction. Rationale: While rare, a disqualification penalty includes the suspension of a student-athlete for the next contest. Providing conferences an option to appeal a possible incorrect enforcement to ensure a student-athlete is not incorrectly suspended is a benefit.
6	<u>40.1</u>	<u>Abuse of Officials:</u> Added a minor penalty option for players that exhibit unsporting conduct toward officials. Currently, the only option to penalty players is a misconduct penalty (10 minutes), which does not impact a team’s on-ice strength. Rationale: This aligns the penalty for student-athletes with the enforcement options for coaches and non-playing personnel.

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7	<u>45.1</u>	Contact to the Head: The committee approved several adjustments to this rule, to read: <u>“Illegal Check to the Head</u> – A hit resulting in contact with an opponent’s head where the head was the main point of contact and such contact to the head was avoidable is not permitted. In determining whether contact with an opponent's head was avoidable, the circumstances of the hit including the following shall be considered: <u>(I) Whether the player attempted to hit squarely through the opponent’s body and the head was not “picked” as a result of poor timing, poor angle of approach, or unnecessary extension of the body upward or outward.</u> <u>(ii) Whether the opponent put themselves in a vulnerable position by assuming a posture that made head contact on an otherwise full body check unavoidable.</u> <u>(iii) Whether the opponent materially changed the position of their body or head immediately prior to or simultaneously with the hit in a way that significantly contributed to the head contact.</u> <u>Penalty options: Minor, major and game misconduct or disqualification.</u> Rationale: This continues the evolution of this rule to enhance student-athlete safety and fairness to both players involved in contact. Added to this penalty is a minor penalty to provide more options of game officials, particularly in situations where contact is inadvertent and the player delivering contact is using legal tactics. The committee is removing the option of a major-only penalty since any significant illegal contact of this type should be penalized with a major and game misconduct at a minimum. The committee believes it has found a good balance – this penalty has been effective in reducing contact to the head in the game overall.
8	<u>50</u>	Hitting From Behind: The committee is proposing an adjustment to this rule to include the following penalty structure and guidance: <u>Minor or Major Penalty:</u> A player shall not push, charge, cross-check or body check an opponent from behind in open ice.

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		Minor or Major Penalty: <u>When a player intentionally turns his/her body to create contact with their back, a minor penalty shall be assessed to the player delivering the contact. If an opponent put themselves in a vulnerable position by assuming a posture that made checking from behind on an otherwise legal body check unavoidable.</u> Major and Game Misconduct: Any player who cross-checks, pushes or charges an opponent who is in a vulnerable from behind into the side boards, end boards or goal cage. Major and Disqualification: The referee has discretion to assess a disqualification penalty if the attacking player delivers contact to an opponent by checking from behind into the side boards, end boards or goal cage that is severe and/or reckless. These situations, based on the severity of the contact, shall be assessed either a major and game misconduct or major and disqualification penalty. These options occur in situations when contact is delivered by: • A player that is reckless; • A player that delivers a late hit; • A player that extends and directs the arm, elbow, forearm or shoulder to contact to the back of an opponent; • A player that extends the body and targets the opponent's back; • A player that leaves their skates or launches in order to deliver a blow to the back; • A player that uses the stick in any way to target a player's back (e.g., cross checking, butt-ending, etc.). Rationale: This continues to be an important rule to protect players that are receiving contact. In recent years, some players receiving contact are using a tactic of turning just before contact to draw a penalty. This tactic is unfair to players that are otherwise delivering legal contact. This also puts the player receiving the contact in a potentially dangerous situation. The committee believes this guidance will provide game officials all tools to appropriate penalize violations of these rules, while also providing options for legal tactics for coaches to teach.
9	<u>79.3</u>	Ethnic/Racial Slurs: To enhance this rule describing prohibited behavior to read: "Making profane, threatening, vulgar, or derogatory remarks or personal comments relating to race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability."

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		Additionally, the penalty was adjusted to only have a game disqualification option, which includes an ejection from that game and suspension from the next game. Rationale: This strengthens the rules regarding prohibited comments/actions.
10	<u>81.2</u>	Faceoff – Puck out of Play in Offensive Zone: In situations where the puck is deflected out of play in the offensive zone, the faceoff will remain in the zone. Previously, some situations could result in a neutral zone faceoff. Rationale: This simplifies the rules and limits the amount of officials' discussion to determine the faceoff location.
11	<u>81.2</u>	Faceoff - Procedure: The faceoff procedure was adjusted during situations where a violation occurs. The offending team's center will be removed on the first faceoff violation and an alternative player will participate in the faceoff. The only exception to this procedure will be a faceoff after situations where one team may not change its players. In those cases, a violation by the team committing the icing infraction will result in a warning, but the player taking the faceoff will remain. The penalty for a second violation during any faceoff procedure remains the same (bench minor penalty for delay of game). Rationale: After two years of experience with the current procedure, the committee believes returning to this procedure, with the adjustment for no-change situations, will improve the faceoff procedure.
12	<u>87.2</u>	High-Sticking the Puck: The committee is adjusting the reference point for high-sticking the puck infractions to be "above the height of the player's shoulders" instead of four feet. Rationale: After a successful experimental rule used in some conferences, the committee believes this provides a better measure for today's game and should reduce the number of stoppages for high-sticking the puck. The committee did note some support for allowing players to high stick the puck at any time, but after significant discussion, believe there would be some significant unintended consequences to opening this rule too greatly.
13	<u>91.1 and 91.2</u>	Tied Games – Regular Season. All NCAA regular-season games that remained tied will use a five-minute overtime period with three skaters on each side (unless penalties are in effect). If the game remains tied after the five-minute overtime, a shootout will be conducted.

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		Rationale: The committee debated this proposal at length and ultimately decided the game format should be the same across all levels of college hockey. The rules committee also confirmed each of the NCAA championship committees do not plan to use the results of a shootout in any way when comparing and selecting teams for NCAA postseason competition.
14	<u>93</u>	Video Replay. During postseason games where video replay is used, all overtime goals will be cleared by the video replay official. Each postseason entity (e.g., NCAA championship or conference) will determine which allowable video replay procedure to use. Rationale: This is an effort to streamline the end of overtime games, where a coach’s challenge is typically made, often without merit. The main aspects of how a goal is scored will be reviewed automatically (e.g., offside) and if a review is required, the review is conducted consistent with the rest of the game (e.g., on-ice officials make the final determination, if that procedure is in use).
15	<u>93.4</u>	Video Replay. In situations where a review is being conducted to determine if a player will be ejected, officials will have all options available to enforce after the review (no penalty, minor, major, game misconduct, disqualification). Rationale: This adjustment provides officials the proper tools to use judgement when reviewing and enforcing the most significant penalties in the game. This will enhance the officials’ ability to properly penalize the actions on the ice and allow for decisions that are more accurate. Guidance will be provided to guard against using replay too often.
16	<u>93.4</u>	Video Replay – Missed Game Stoppage. The committee will allow, through a coach’s challenge, the opportunity to review a missed game stoppage that occurs in the offensive zone. For example, if the puck was high-sticked by the attacking team in the offensive zone and a goal is scored without the puck leaving the zone, a team challenge would allow this to be reviewed. Rationale: This allows the game officials to correct a missed stoppage, provided the missed infraction occurred in the offensive zone by the attacking team and the puck did not leave the offensive zone. The committee believes these situations will be limited.

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17	<u>93.4 and 31.1</u>	Continuous Play Concept. The committee is adding an allowance for situations where an official blows their whistle, but in the immediate continuous action, a goal is scored. This goal may be awarded by the on-ice officials (with or without the use of video replay). To qualify, the blowing of the whistle must not have impacted the actions of the players on the ice. Rationale: The committee reviewed several situations and noted several situations where immediately after an officials' whistle was blown, the puck crossed the goal line (e.g., shot on goal that trickles behind the goalkeeper and the referee is blocked by other players). This allows officials to appropriately count a goal that was otherwise scored legally.
18	<u>94</u>	Women's Hockey - Contact. The women's representatives of the committee are developing additional rules wording and video guidance to assist all in the game to refine the different elements of legal and illegal contact. The focus will be on accidental collisions, incidental contact and loose puck battles and illustrating the expectations for all involved. The goal will be to describe collisions and loose puck battles that are sometimes being interpreted incorrectly as violations for body checking. Rationale: Generally, the committee believes the standard of enforcement and understanding in the women's game is improving. It is important to continue to draw the line between some physicality from competition and illegal actions, including body checking.