



WINKLER MINOR HOCKEY

Body Checking Versus Body Contact

Part1:Rule6.2b, Boarding and Body Checking

Here is the rule about body checking from Hockey Canada: “In divisions of Pee Wee and below and Female Hockey (and any Bantam/Midget A2 or A3 in Hockey Winnipeg), a Minor penalty for Body Checking or, at the discretion of the Referee, a Major penalty and a Game Misconduct penalty shall be assessed any player who, in the opinion of the Referee, intentionally body checks, bumps, shoves or pushes any opposing player.

If a player is injured, a Major penalty and a Game Misconduct penalty must be assessed. When the offensive player is skating towards the defensive player, the defending player may not hit the offensive player by going in the opposite direction to that player.

The body contact must be as a result of the movement of the offensive player. There must be no action where the offensive player is pushed, checked or shoved into the boards. Where, in the opinion of the Referee, accidental contact has taken place, no penalty shall be assessed. A Match Penalty could also be assessed under this rule.”

There is a second way of thinking about body checking versus body contact that can simplify the above paragraph. Ultimately, the decision of the referee is to assess (or not assess) a penalty. There are two criteria that should be considered. If one of the two is confirmed with a "yes" then a penalty may be warranted or may not. If both questions are confirmed with a “yes” then a penalty should be called.

The two questions are:

1. Did the offending player use excess force beyond what is expected for this situation considering the skill level of hockey and for this specific play?

a. What referees should watch for:

Watch for a player to use more force than what would naturally occur as part of that play whether through use of her hands or body.

b. What to tell players: Find a way to gain body position. Get to the puck rather than through the other player.



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2. Was the offending player initially and intentionally targeting the other player's body?

a. What referees should watch for:

Watch the "offending" player's stick or skate to be trying to play the puck. Making a body check and playing the puck are not actions that can happen at the same time therefore, if an effort is made to play the puck then a body check is less likely.

b. What to tell players: Find a way to get your stick or skate to the puck.

Part 2: Applying the two questions

Note: these examples are with minimal context and cannot be looked at as all encompassing.

1. Defense A3 is beaten around the outside by B5. A3's stick is to the middle of the ice when she rubs B5 into the boards with enough force for her to fall down and lose the puck. (Penalty as A3 used excessive force than was natural for the play and her stick was not engaging the puck)

2. Offence B6 is one-on-one with A11. A11 is steering B6 towards the boards with A11 having her stick towards the middle of the ice. As B6 and A11 run out of room they both engage on the puck with their sticks at the boards with incidental body contact. No penalty even though A11's stick was initially away from the play as she brought her stick in. There was not excessive force from either player during the steering to the boards or the battle for the puck

Is No-Body Checking hockey a physical game?

The answer is a yes. Although less so than body contact leagues.



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1. Players battle for body position along the boards all the time in the no-body checking league. So long as the focus is on the puck and gaining body position then the play is physical but legal.

2. All body contact is not a penalty. For body contact to become bodychecking, the two questions above need to be applied.

3. There are 10 players and 2 goaltenders on the ice. Rule 6.2b is designed to refocus the players on the puck so referees need to keep the game safe from a focus on body checking. Players will bump each other in pursuit of the puck.