



HWRD Introduction to Game Management Course

1) An example of a bad situation

Think of one situation from a game you have officiated (or seen) that got out of hand? How did you (or the ref) handle the situation? How did it get out of hand? What would you have done differently to prevent that situation? If there was nothing you could do, what factors led to the event?

2) Managing yourself

- a) During a hockey game, what events or situations increase your stress or your adrenaline?
- b) What strategies do you use to keep yourself engaged in a boring game?
- c) During a hockey game, what strategies do you use to decrease your stress levels?

3) Mindfulness

- a) How might you apply this type of tool while you referee a hockey game? What situations may you apply this skills?
- b) What are the barriers to using this type of skill during a game?

4) To Read: In-game stress reduction

(this resources is found on wpgrefs.com)

Refereeing is a stressful job and stress levels rise under various circumstances such as:

- Making a call that you wish you had not made or making a good call at a call at a key time
- Having the fans yell; having the coaches yell
- Being mentored

This article aims to discuss what we can do about stress while we are in the middle of a game. Stress is an important topic for referees because, a side from *decreasing our job satisfaction*, it also *increases the risk of making more errors*. Here are two techniques that can be done in less than 5 seconds and may help you decrease stress:

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

PMR has two steps and can be applied to any muscle group of ones' body.

1. Tense muscles



- a. Select a group of muscles (i.e. one of your arms/hand)
 - b. Take a deep breath, tense/flex that muscle group as hard as you can
 - c. Count to 5 (or the length of one part of the line change procedure)
2. Relax the muscles
 - a. After 5 seconds let your breath out
 - b. Let the muscles relax.

Mindful Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)¹ 5-second breath-awareness

Stress is often associated with worrying about the future or regretting the past. Therefore, a second method of stress reduction is being in the present and MBSR, in its simplest form, is a breathing-focus technique. Here are three steps to a 5 second present-focus exercise:

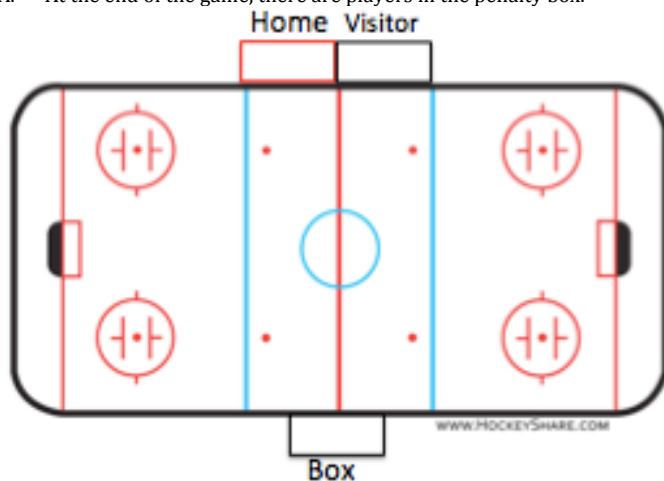
- 1) Focus on your breath, feel your chest expand and contract, feel the air move down into your lungs and then out again, let your thoughts drift to the back of your mind and just be with your breath.
- 2) Open your awareness to your senses (seeing, tasting, hearing, touching, smelling). What is the first thing that you are aware of? Do not analyze whatever you are sensing, do not think about it, just accept and appreciate it
- 3) Bring yourself back to the present moment with a clear mind ready to referee.

¹ According to medical and psychological research, these two techniques have been shown to decrease stress and increase performance of students and employees as well as increase survival rates of patients with various illnesses. In general, people who take part in Mindful Exercises report lower stress than a control group of people who do not and, in another study, an MBSR group of seniors experienced less flu symptoms than a group of seniors who did not participate in the MBSR group.

5) Identify hotspots

For each of the following 1) identify potential hot spots for the officials to establish presence by circling the area on the ice and 2) by labeling the position the officials should take on the ice in the two official system.

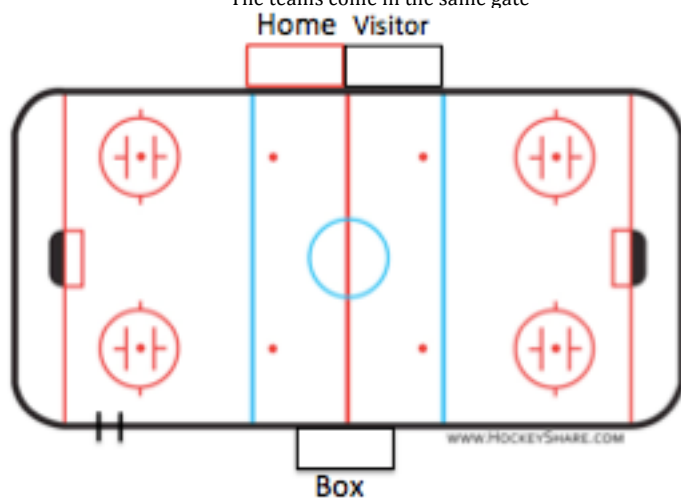
- A. At the end of the game, there are players in the penalty box.



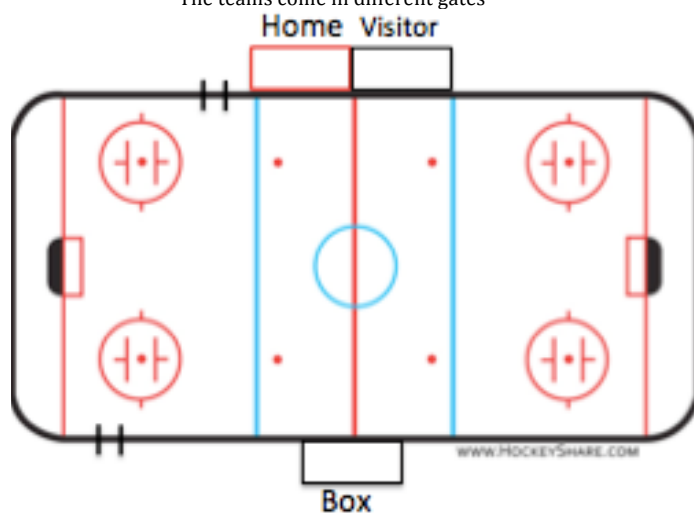
- B. Coincidental penalties come to an end but cannot leave the box until the next stoppage



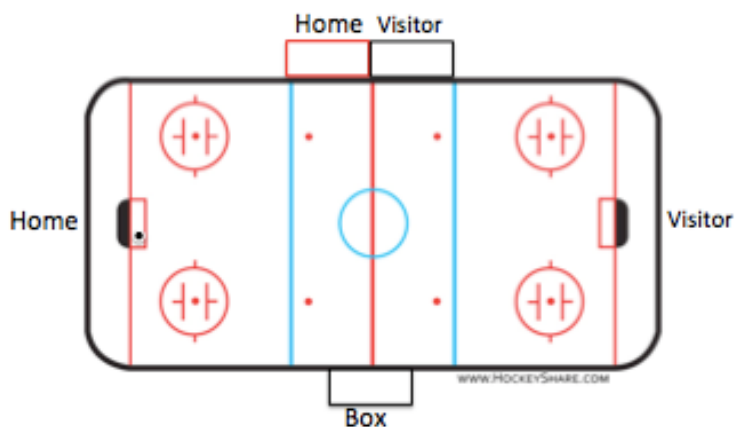
- C. After the ice is flooded, the teams are coming on the ice. The teams come in the same gate



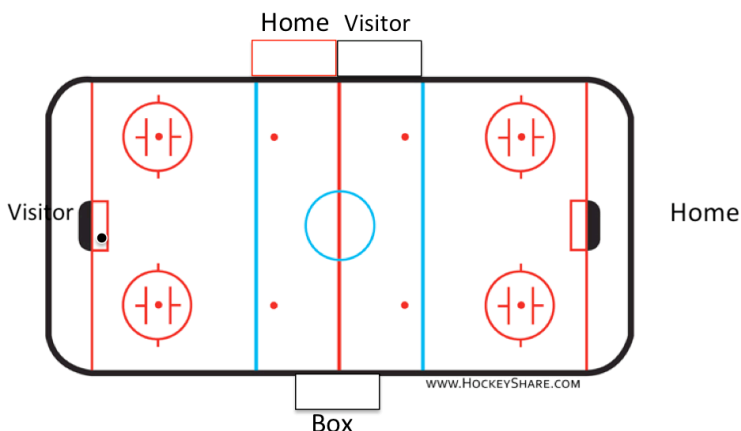
The teams come in different gates



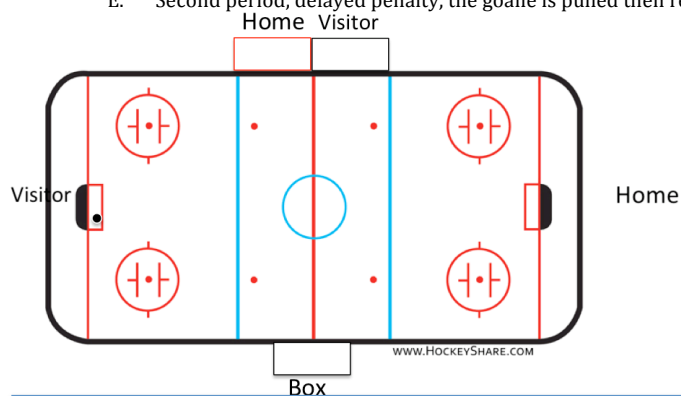
- D. After a goal is scored.
By the visiting team in period 1 or 3



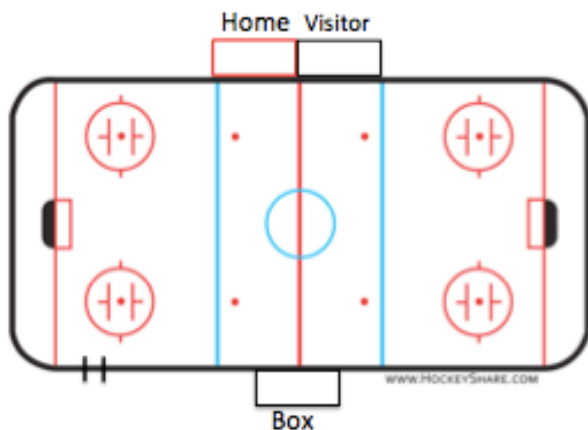
By the home team in period 2



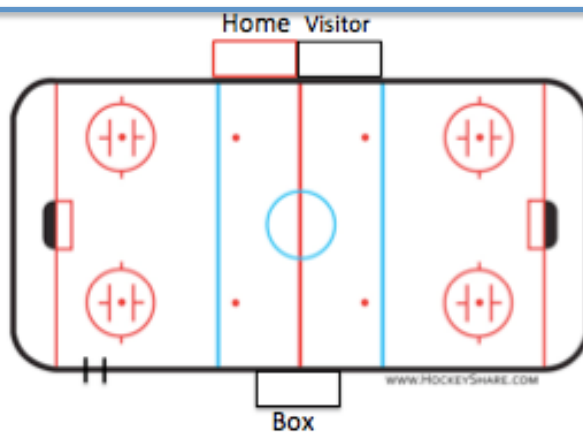
- E. Second period, delayed penalty, the goalie is pulled then returns to the net at the next stoppage.



- F. There is at least one penalty called against both teams.



- G. Handshake line is taking place.





6) To read: Talking to a coach

(this resource is found on wpgrefs.com)

Talking to coaches is a part of the game. Whether you talk to a coach or not depends on your style, the demands of the game, and the level of hockey. Here are some guidelines for you to consider:

- State your opinion, listen to the coach, then leave. Do not argue or debate. Answer clarifying questions as needed.
- Never talk to a coach at the end of the period (especially if there is a flood). This sets you up for a long conversation that may be related to his or her being upset.
- If you must talk to a coach between periods, do so right before the start of the next period (if there is a flood). Make sure you have an excuse to leave (i.e. to drop the puck).
- If a coach is yelling at you, do not talk to him. Penalize, ignore, or talk to the captain. Make a circle around the position of an "A" or "C" on your chest and say "CAPTAIN, PLEASE".
- If you penalize a coach, do not go talk to them. They lost that privilege when they were penalized.
- Minimize talking to coaches during the game; talk to the captains to maintain flow of the game.
- When talking to a coach; Ask her to step off the bench to equalize the power between you.
- Many officials only talk to the coach for major penalties, injuries, disputed goals or multiple penalties. Otherwise, they talk to the captain.
- Whether you talk to a coach or not is up to you. Some referees never speak to coaches (they prefer captains, some always talk to coaches, and sometimes (i.e. little kid hockey) speaking to coaches is easier.
- A lot of the time, you need to find a balance, understand what the situation requires and adapt appropriately.

When talking to a coach, **you can phrase a statement to decrease the odds of an argument.**

For example, consider the following statements

1. "Coach, he stuck his leg out and made contact ankle to ankle not knee to knee so it is a two minute minor for tripping..."
2. "From my angle, Coach, I saw his leg come out then contact was made ankle to ankle so I felt a tripping penalty was more appropriate."

The first statement will get you stuck because you do not leave any "grey-area" as you have effectively made a black-and-white statement. The second statement leaves room for differing opinions for two reasons:

- "From my angle..." gives credit to the nature of refereeing hockey; the referee's perspective effects most calls on the ice. Nothing is black-and-white.
- "I saw..." and "I felt..." both are "I" statements that allow you to take ownership of the call. Again, without saying outwardly, the "I" statement says that you have one angle or perspective and the coach has another.

After you have made a statement with "From my angle..." and an "I" statement the coach may still want to argue (or he may say "thank you"). In the event that he wants to argue, your response may be "Coach, I am sorry we saw this play from two different angles. However, we need to drop the puck so we can finish the game in the ice-time. Thanks." At this point, the coach may carry on or she may end the conversation. In either case, you need to skate away.

If the coach does not stop arguing, consider four components of communication that may have effected your message:

1. Volume of voice-were you yelling? Did you sound mad? If you had to yell due to a loud arena, did you tell the coach you were yelling due to the arena not due to the conversation?
2. Tone of voice-were you assertive with a calm voice? Did you sound like you were lecturing the coach?
3. Pace of voice-did you speak too fast so the coach could not understand or too slow so that the coach lost patience?



4. What you said-did you use "from my angle" or an "I" statement? Did you focus on the problem (different angles, getting the game going again) or the person (telling the coach off)?

7) Game Management & Impact Penalties

(This resource is found on wpgrefs.com)

Introduction

"Feel for the game" or "game management" is one of the most important skills an official can bring to the ice. It is also one of the most difficult to evaluate and instruct.

The rule book tells us what actions are punishable. The rule book does not tell us exactly when to apply those rules to effectively manage the game. Deciding when to call a penalty, and assessing the impact it will have on a game, are the keys to effective game management.

Here is a hard truth about refereeing hockey: we cannot call every penalty. Hockey is a contact sport, even at those levels where body checking is not allowed. It is fast, fierce and often chaotic. Assessing every penalty that occurs in a hockey game – without regard to its seriousness and impact on the game – would ruin the experience for players, coaches and fans.

But how do we determine the penalties that must be called, and those that are so insignificant that they should not be used to interrupt the flow of the game?

The simple answer is that officials must become good game managers. They must make calls that promote safety and fairness in all aspects of the game. They must read complex situations quickly and confidently, and establish a clearly defined standard for what is allowable and what is over the line.

The Principles of Game Management

Many officials believe that a thorough knowledge of the rules is the most important attribute. Knowing the rules is very important. However, we must not overlook "feel for the game."

The foundation of "feel for the game" is built on two equally important principles: games must be **fair**; and they must be **safe**. We ensure fairness and safety by focusing on the timing, type and frequency of penalties.

Let's look at some key questions that many officials ask as they attempt to grasp the principles of game management.

When does effective game management begin?

Officials must apply the principles of game management early in the game to establish clear standards for what infractions are unacceptable and which minor infractions will be permitted to keep the game flowing.

Establishing these standards early makes the game safe and fair for everyone. Officials that wait too long to call penalties may find that they lose control of the game. Once a game is out of hand, it is too late to start trying to create a standard of safety and fairness.

How do I recognize an 'IMPACT Penalty?'

Penalties that threaten the safety and fairness of the game are called "Impact Penalties." As the name suggests, these penalties have a direct "impact" on the standards set by the officials.

Some impact penalties are easily recognized and must be called every time they occur. These penalties include checking from behind or any penalty involving head contact, stick infractions, roughing after the whistle, or any action that qualifies as reckless, unsafe or that involves intent to injure another player.

With other penalties, the line between impact and non-impact is harder to spot.



A tripping penalty can be an impact penalty if the infraction leads to a change in possession or possibly a scoring chance by the offending team. Or, if the trip clearly denies a scoring chance to the player being fouled. However, a player who is tripped well away from the puck may not be worth calling, as long as there was no injury and no clear threat to his/her safety.

Remember: Assessing Impact Penalties send very clear messages to the players, coaches and the entire arena about the type of play that will be permitted and what is unacceptable at all times.

Remember, teams will adopt their style to the penalty standard of the referee. Therefore, it is part of the job of the Referee to focus on those infractions that have the most IMPACT rather than those infractions that are inconsequential.

The key to good game management: self-evaluation

During a game, referees should always reflect on how players responded to a particular penalty. Did it make the game fairer and safer? They should ask themselves, 'was that an impact penalty? Is that a penalty I want to enforce consistently throughout the rest of the game?

This kind of self-reflection will prevent a referee from falling into the trap of calling too many weak penalties too early in a game and then, realizing that you've called the game too tightly, having to change the standard of your calls later. That will enrage players, coaches and fans.

Refereeing is like holding a bird...

If you squeeze a bird too tightly, you can kill it. Hold on to the bird too loosely and it will get away. The same holds true for managing a hockey game.

You need to maintain a firm enough grip on the game to ensure that it is safe and fair. However, you do not want to squeeze the game so tightly that every time two players bump into each other you have to blow your whistle.

The key is balance; holding the game so it is in control, but not squeezing it to death.



For each video, answer the following questions to better explore impact penalties.

Video	What Penalty/No-Call would you make?	What are you communicating to the arena with this call?	What does the player/coach learn from the call?	If you called it the opposite way what would you communicate to the arena?
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