



15 Second line change: perspectives of the officials

In this document you will find the perspectives of two officials during a 15 second line change.

Point-of-view 1: The official doing the line change.

Hi my name is Dave and I am not dropping the puck for this face-off. I am either a referee or one official in the two-official system.

The play has been stopped, the players have separated, and my partner (Melissa) is getting ready for the face-off. I have positioned myself somewhere on the ice where I can easily see both benches and they can see me but I am close enough to where I need to be for the next faceoff that I can get there in less than a couple of seconds. I look at the visiting team. They have five seconds to change. I try to make eye contact with the coach...he may or may not look at me...he has not...his players are changing...1...2...3...4...5...ok raise my hand...the visiting team can no longer change. I look at the home team coach...she may or may not look at me...she gets 5 seconds to change her players...1...2...check to make sure the visiting team is not sneaking a change...3...4...5...I drop my hand and my partner (Melissa) blows her whistle immediately. I am now going to get into position for the face off and count the players on the ice...yes there are 5 + 1 a goalie for each team. I am done my job with line change.

Point-of-view 2: The official dropping the puck

Hi my name is Melissa and I am dropping the puck for the next face-off. I could be a linesman in the three-referee system or the official in the two-official system who is dropping the puck.

Ok. All the players have separated. I have picked up the puck. I am looking around to make sure that the players are not going after each other while I stand near the next faceoff spot. I glance at Dave, who is looking at the visiting bench...he is in the first 5 seconds of line change...ok...I look at the players around me...they are still behaving...look back at Dave...his hand is still down...look around a players...look at Dave...his hand is up and he is looking at the home bench...ok he is now in the second 5 seconds...look at players...back at Dave...his hand is still up...check on players...most of them are here now...look at Dave...his hand is going down...**BLOW MY WHISTLE NOW**...5 seconds until I need to drop the puck...I need to tell them "OK GUYS, LET'S GO. TIME TO DROP THE PUCK." Check players behind me by the boards...face the faceoff dot...players are legally set...time to drop the puck...

Summary: 15 seconds from breaking up players to dropping the puck.

Dave and Melissa have walked you through what they are thinking as they correctly complete a line change. Note the general process:

- 1) Once players have separated from last play, the visiting team has 5 seconds to change.
- 2) The line-change official raises his hand, looks at the home bench (while also being aware of the visiting bench-making sure they do not try to change illegally) and the home team has 5 seconds to change.
- 3) The line-change official drops hand and the face-off official blows her whistle immediately upon hand being dropped.
- 4) Face-off official drops puck less than 5 seconds after blowing whistle so long as all players are lined up legally. If a player is not lined up within this 5 seconds, the centerman is ejected, the faceoff official immediately blows her whistle again and the last 5 seconds restarts.

Importance

In minor hockey, officials often state that "Last change is never used." However, all officials should learn this system because, never is impossible. Also:

- 1) Many officials will have the opportunity to work AAA hockey where line change is used by the coaches.
- 2) There will always be that one game when you least expect last change to be desired.
- 3) If you do it right, you can support yourself if the coach complains about last change.

Note: Line change procedure changes for icings in games with no-change icing. Please see the "No-Change Icing" document found in the resource section for more information.