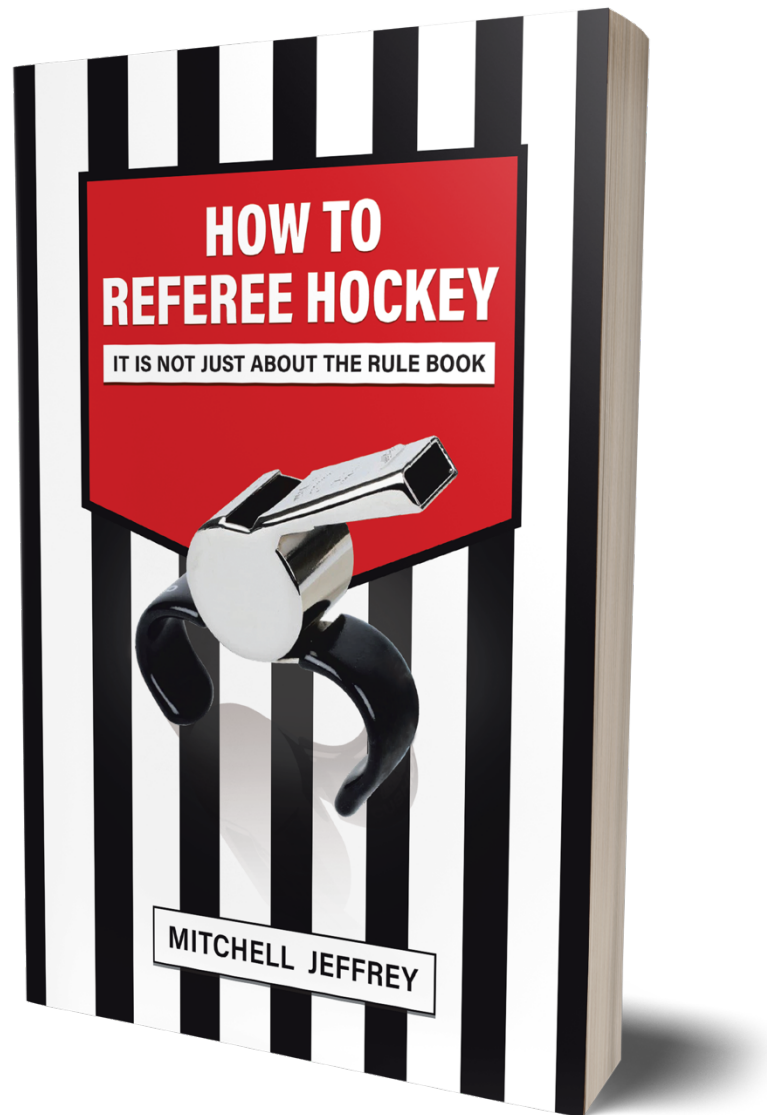




Excerpt 3

**Just Call Nothing Versus Just
Call Everything**

Just Call Nothing Versus Just Call Everything

Through the first part of this chapter, the focus has been on the definition of impact penalties and impact non-calls. The next two discussions focus on two approaches that will prevent you from effectively applying impact penalties to manage a hockey game.

The first approach is “just call nothing” (also known as “letting them play” or “being a player’s ref”). Indeed, some will apply this approach only at playoff time while others apply it all the time. Regardless, the just call nothing approach is not as effective as calling impact penalties.

The second approach is to “just call everything”. In this approach the referee or official may be trying to remove all the bad behaviours so that only the good ones remain. Alternatively, perhaps the referee or official sees their duty to call the rulebook to the letter of the law. Regardless the reason, just calling everything causes frustration and is not as effective as calling impact penalties.

It is possible, that by complete luck, either of these approaches could be successful in one game here or that game there. Afterall, some games will require you to call no penalties, some will require a lot of penalties, but most will require something in between. Therefore, your goal is to be ready for any game type and impact penalties will address all games not just specific types. Therefore, the next two sections will outline the problems with just call nothing and just call everything before the discussion transitions back to impact penalties.

Three Problems with Just Call Nothing

The first problem with not calling any penalties is the failure to communicate and set a clear boundary between legal and illegal play. Impact penalties clearly communicate what is and not allowed in a hockey game. Without penalties, you are missing a key tool in communicating the line between allowed and not allowed.

The second problem is the impossible standard of zero. Eventually, something is going to happen that will force you to make a call. Unfortunately, by that point the effectiveness of an impact penalty is minimal. Hockey players will look for the boundary set by the referee or official and they will push the limits until the one is set. For example, if you ignore something worthy of a minor or double-minor penalty, then players will continue to increase intensity and violence until a player earns a major penalty for head contact or injures an opponent. If you, call the first impact penalty, you may prevent the game from escalating to dangerous play.

Finally, just call nothing rewards rough or dirty play while penalizing skilled play. If no penalties are called, teams that bend or break the rules will have advantages over teams that focus on skills, stamina, and work ethic. This just does not make sense; teams that push the limits of the rules should be penalized more than teams that play with skill.

Three Problems with Just Call Everything

Just call everything has three problems as well. The first problem is that it sets an unattainable standard. You are limited to what you can see and are outnumbered. Of course, players are

smart and will do illegal things when the referee is not looking. You cannot be everywhere and see everything even if her head is on a swivel and you maximize your peripheral and central vision.

The second problem is related to game flow. When calling everything, the game grinds to a halt and is not fun. Calling everything raises frustration levels and emotions. When emotions are high, people are illogical and unpredictable creating a circumstance where just call everything makes the situation worse rather than better.

The third problem requires understanding of the psychology of punishment; the person being punished will come to dislike or hate the person doing the punishing. Therefore, the extreme number of penalties being called in the just call everything approach makes your job harder because the arena will develop more of a dislike for you than if you focused on impact penalties.

*How to Referee Hockey: it is not just about the
Rule Book, By Mitchell Jeffrey*

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