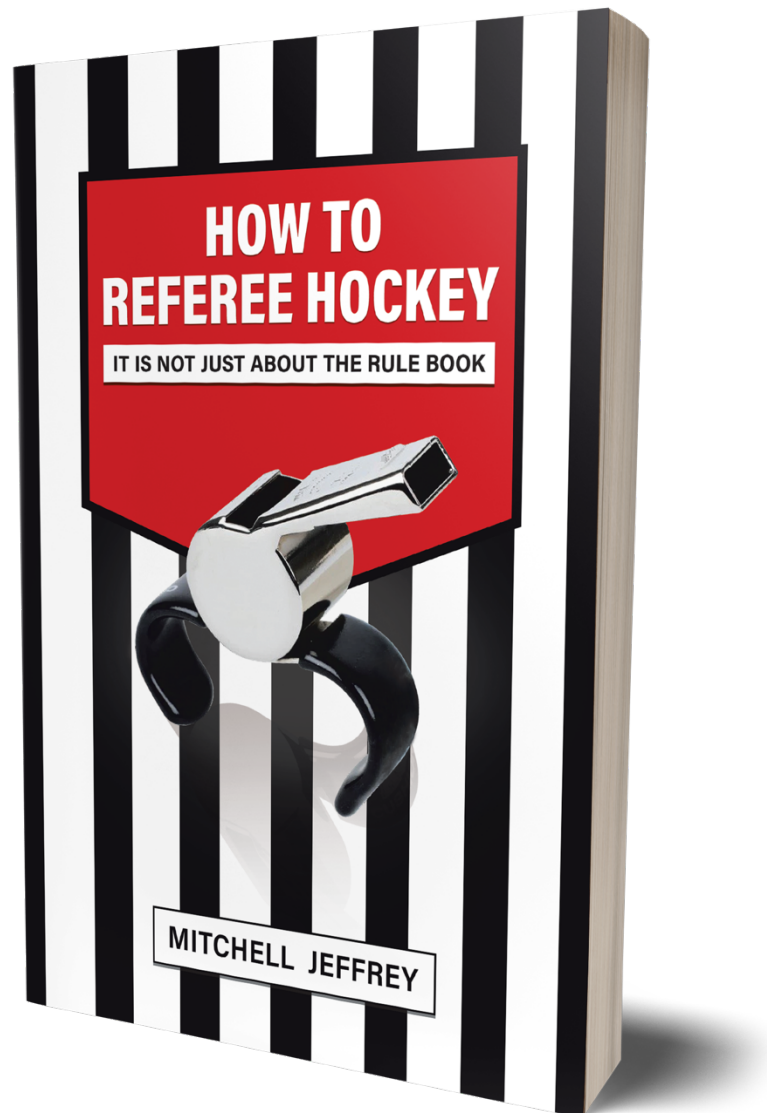




Excerpt 1

Altercations & Fights

Chapter 5: Two-Official System Procedures for Stopping Play

Altercations and Fight Procedures

The first step to understanding how to deal with altercations or fights is to understand the difference:

- Altercations are more common than fights.
- Altercations are not necessarily fights, but they may lead to them.
- Altercations may or may not result in penalties.
- Fights are a more extreme form of an altercation.
- Fights must lead to penalties.

Here are the definitions of each:

- **Altercation:** Any circumstance in which two players from opposing teams aggressively interact with each other rather than quickly separating during a stoppage. This may include aggressively talking to each other or physical interaction (slashing, poking, pushing).
- **Fight:** Any altercation that results in the removal of equipment and/or two players throwing punches in a way that can be considered “squaring-off”.

Here is the general approach for managing an altercation:

1. You do not necessarily need to make physical contact¹ with players during an altercation.
2. Establish yourself in close proximity to the players. Sometimes just reminding the players of your presence is enough to stop an altercation.
3. Use your voice or whistle to try to make the altercation stop.
4. Repeat as necessary.
5. Make physical contact only when someone’s safety is at risk.

In the Two-Official System, the official who stops play uses this procedure (written from the official’s point of view):

1. I stop play and notice two opposition players talking to each other. I take up a position close enough to talk to both players and far enough away to see as much of the ice as possible. My job is to watch the big picture—the entire ice surface—as well as this possible altercation.
2. My partner has arrived in between all the players and is encouraging them to skate away. I keep talking² to the players yapping at each other, using my voice and whistle as necessary.

¹ “Physical contact” refers to grabbing or forcibly removing a player and is only done as a last resort when another player’s safety is at risk. Do not confuse physical position (which is getting between players and happens at all stoppages) and physical contact.

² What you say is highly dependent on the game situation. For example, if it is a close game you could say “Ok guys, close game. You don’t want a penalty, knock it off.” If the game is a blow-out you may say “Hey guys, let’s just get this game done and go home.” Alternatively, you may not say anything if that is what the situation calls for.

3. As the players separate, my partner and I make eye contact and verbally state who will deal with the benches/line change³ and who will retrieve the puck/conduct the faceoff.

The other official, who did not stop play, uses this procedure:

1. I see my partner stop play and two players start talking to each other. While my partner starts talking to them, I skate efficiently and quickly into whatever groups of players are around the players talking to each other.
2. When I arrive, I tell the players to start their line change and use positive-assertive language to encourage them to separate. I do not physically grab anyone, but I use my body position to make people aware of my presence. My job is to be in with the players.
3. As the players separate, my partner and I make eye contact and verbally state who will deal with the benches/line change and who will retrieve the puck/conduct the faceoff.

Know your job, do your job: the officials' best tool during an altercation is their voice, and the whistle is a second option. The final option is physical involvement. However, do not physically grab players unless a players' safety is at risk as physical interventions usually increase the intensity of the situation.

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

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³ For the official who wants to learn the line change procedure, please go to chapter 6.