

## **IIHF Officiating Standard - Hits along the Boards, Slashing and Spearing**

### Hits along the Boards

The implementation of IIHF Officiating Standard which targeted restraining fouls for many years has increased the speed of the players on the ice and the pressure on the puck. The increase of speed, a reduced control of the players in the vicinity of the boards, and the tactic of puck protection by the body have all been responsible for an increase of body contact along the boards.

The physical element, good hits and a players' ability to use his skills are all a part of the game. However, every attempt must be made to maintain a safe environment for the players.

Every player has the personal responsibility to avoid putting himself in a vulnerable position, while at the same time a player applying a check must ensure his opponent is not in a defenseless position and if so, to avoid or minimize the contact to his opponent.

The following are factors to be considered when determining the application of the rules:

1. Did the opponent put himself in a vulnerable position immediately prior or simultaneously with the check and thus in a defenseless position
2. Was the contact or check unavoidable
3. Were the two players "engaged" and battling for the puck before contact with the boards
4. Were the boards used as a weapon to increase the impact to the opponent
5. Did the checking player use excessive force and/or increased acceleration to deliver the check
6. Was the intent of the check to separate an opponent from the puck, to play the puck or to punish the opponent
7. Was the opponent thrown violently into the boards as a result of the check

Noise or injury should not be a factor in relation to a penalty. The onus is on the player applying the check to ensure his opponent is not in a defenseless position and if so, he must avoid or minimize the contact to his opponent. However, in determining whether such contact could have been avoided the circumstances of the check including whether the opponent put himself in a vulnerable position immediately prior to or simultaneously with the check; whether the player applying the check pushed or put his opponent in a vulnerable position or whether the check was unavoidable should be considered.

### Slashing

A player who puts the shaft of his stick between an opponent's legs and by lifting the stick contacts the groin area of the opponent with the shaft of his stick is to be classified as "Slashing" and should be penalized in accordance with Rule 537 - Slashing.

### Spearing

The "spearing" action is clearly defined in Rule 538 of the IIHF Rule Book. Where the spearing action is directed and contact is made with the opponent's body, article (b) or (c) of Rule 538 must be implemented by the Referee.