SITUATION OF THE WEEK

Situation: Following pre-game stick check, officials shared with one another that the red team had two dressed goalies, and the white team had one dressed goalie. Early in the second half, the white team goalie was awarded a yellow card for a check to the head on a red attack player wrapping the circle. Five minutes later, the white goalie again made card-able contact with a red attack player coming around the circle. She was issued a second yellow card. For the first yellow card, the fouled player was given a hash, penalty zone cleared, and the goalie remained in her circle. The white team coach removed a field player to serve the goalie’s 2 minute penalty. For the second yellow, the goalie was suspended and had to leave the game. A field player was given time to put on goalie equipment and took her place in the goal circle. The coach pulled another player off the field to serve the 2 minute penalty. The fouled player was again given a hash with penalty zone cleared. Correct penalty administration?

Answer: Incorrect.

Incorrect, when there is only one dressed goalie, that goalie may stay in the game when she receives a first yellow card. The team’s coach does designate a field player to serve the 2-minute penalty. All of that was done correctly. However, when the carded goalie is the carded “offender”, she must take a position 4m behind the fouled player. In this instance the fouled player would be put on appropriate hash, the goalie 4m behind, penalty zone cleared – open net.

Again, when the 2nd card was given to the same goalie, the officials were correct in allowing time for a field player to put on goalie equipment if the team chooses to do so. That is allowed within the rules. The coach would then designate another field player to serve the 2-minute penalty as with the initial card. The field player who is now dressed as a goalie must take the “offenders” position 4m behind the fouled player. In both instances, the net will be open on the free position.

This is a good example of why we share with our partners the number of “dressed goalies” after stick check. It helps to have this piece of information in case of multiple cards on the goalie. It is also important to note that the players serving the goalie’s 2 minute penalty in no way are assessed a yellow card. They did not do the crime, they are just serving the time.

Rule Reference: Page 65 Goalkeeper misconduct penalties, 1-6
Q&A’s

CLEARING TO “THE DOT”

**Question #1:** So many situations now clear to “the dot.” Alternating possession, goal circle fouls, so when we clear the penalty zone, my partner and I cleared players going below the goal line to the dot. Can you clarify?

**Answer:** If the players are clearing below the GLE, they may clear – shortest route/most direct path – to any spot along that imaginary line from “dot to dot”, or the imaginary line from the dots up to the GLE. They do not have to stand “at the dot,” just below the line made from “dot to dot.”

**Rule Reference:** Page 74, definition and diagram

EQUIPMENT VIOLATION?

**Question #1:** One of our officials noticed that a school in our district has their school initial imprinted on their lacrosse goalie net. Is this legal?

**Answer:** We do want to review the field and equipment before each game to be sure all are safe and meet the guidelines shared in our 2019 NFHS rule book. Having said that, let’s challenge ourselves to think about the intent of the rules, safe and fair play. Virtually every rule we have is to protect the safety of our players, and to create a fair game experience. Our rule book shares zero restrictions on imprints for the netting for goals. While it may be infrequent, it’s not illegal.

**Note:** We love that our officials are committed to making sure everything is “right”. We do have a lot on our plates, so if something you see is not noted as “illegal” in our rulebook, let it go! Work to promote a positive experience for the players and for your crew. If you have a concern, call your interpreter following your game. We’re happy to take a look.

**Rule Reference:** Page 11, Art 2

WHISTLE OR SELF START?

**Question #1:** Is 3 seconds in the 8m always a whistle start, no matter where the ball is?

**Answer:** The 3-second call is always made for a foul that happened in the 8m arc. That arc is in the CSA. Our rule book shares that no self-starts are allowed for fouls that happen in the CSA. So, whether the ball is inside or outside of the CSA, when a 3-second foul is called, the play will be restarted with a whistle. Preventive management here! Officials, if the FP is outside of the CSA remind the ball carrier, “whistle start!” If she self-starts, reset, and whistle start.

**Rule Reference:** Page 40, Art 4 “c”
PENALTY ZONE UPDATE

How should we be clearing that tricky area above GLE, just outside the goal circle?

A discussion point at several recent chapter meetings has been directed to the question above; Do we simply take shortest route out – above GLE or below GLE equally fine? Or do we give heavier consideration to “while maintaining same relative position”? Good news. Response has been to keep things simple and easy for players and officials to understand and administer. “Shortest route out” (Rule book, pg 58) will be the guideline to follow, with the player allowed to go above or below the goal line if the distances are about equal.

REMEMBER FOR THE WEEK

It’s hard to be at your best when the situation around you is adversarial. Talk about this pre-game with your partner. How will you help and support each other if a situation escalates? How will you deal with a player that is angry or upset on the field? How will you help your partner if you see them getting angry? A professional, united front is critical. Work hard to keep your own emotions in check and to deliver responses to questions briefly, and within the language of the rules. If you make a mistake – we are human – own it. Tell the coach, “Coach, you’re right, I may have missed that.” This acknowledgement can often defuse a hot situation. If the game did not go so well, review with your partner after the game. What might have you both have done to help, prevent, address, de-escalate? Work to stay calm, and work as a team. Hope your games this coming week are great ones!