



The Ontario Rep Hockey League (“ORHL”) will be introducing modified body contact for U15, U16+ and U18 divisions starting in the 2024-25 hockey season.

Guiding Principles

The following will be the guiding principles of the modified body contact rule, and the things that the Referees will be looking for in the context of body contact:

- The purpose of a body check is to gain possession of the puck; therein the puck must be in the proximity of a player, with an opposing player required to make a play to the puck first
- If a player takes advantage of an unsuspecting player and trades off the body-check instead for trying for possession of the puck, this will still result in a penalty
- Proper body checking technique starts with stick on puck, therefore the stick blade of the player delivering the check must be below the knees
- Only the trunk (hips to shoulders) of the body shall be used to deliver a body check
- The check must be delivered to the trunk (hips to shoulders) and directly from in front or the side of the opponent
- Players will be held accountable for acts of an intimidating or dangerous nature. There will be ZERO open ice hitting

Body Contact and Body-Checking

Body contact is a tactic designed to impede the progress of an opponent. This tactic is a result of the movement of the player to physically impede the direction of the puck carrier anywhere on the ice through skating, angling, and positioning, resulting in intentional contact of two opposing players.

Body-checking is an attempt by a player to gain an advantage on their opponent with the deliberate use of the body. Body-checking results when a player makes deliberate contact with an opposing player with opposite-directional force, when an opposing player intentionally modifies their skating lane intersect to make contact. This can be done through the extension of arms, shoulder, or hips to intentionally make contact with an opposing player.

Body contact, in the manner defined above, has always been a part of the ORHL.

Modified body-checking, under specific new rules, will be introduced into the ORHL as part of the 2024-25 season.

Illegal Body-Checks under the ORHL Modified Body Contact Rule

A Minor, double Minor, Major and Game Misconduct, or Match penalty, at the discretion of the



Referee unless otherwise specified herein, shall be assessed to any player who commits an Illegal Body-Check.

Factors influencing the discretion of the Referee shall be (a) the degree of violence of the impact and (b) whether the opponent was engaged or unsuspecting of the impact.

A goalkeeper is not fair game just because they are outside of the goal crease area. The appropriate penalty should be assessed in every case where an opposing player makes unnecessary contact with the goalkeeper. Incidental contact, at the discretion of the Referee, will be permitted when the goalkeeper is in the act of playing the puck outside his goal crease providing the attacking player has made a reasonable effort to avoid such contact.

All Major penalties are dealt within the ORHL league rules and subject to suspension. Additional to this, any player who repeatedly receives Minor penalties associated with Illegal Body-Checks, each of which are defined below, shall also be subject to possible suspension and/or an in-person meeting with the ORHL Commissioner.

Body-checking - 3rd Player In

When two players are engaged in a one-on-one battle, and a third player arriving into the battle on either team commits to enter that battle, they must play the puck not the body. If the third player in chooses to play the body without any regard for the puck, that player will be assessed penalty.

Body-checking – No Open-Ice Hits

- 1) Any body-check that is not along the boards, regardless of direction of movement, shall be deemed as an Open-Ice hit.
 - a. For further clarity, when a player makes contact with an opposing player without establishing an angle and plays the body only with no effort to play the puck, and the secondary point of contact **is not** the boards, it shall be deemed an Open-Ice Hit.
 - i. This would include a player skating with the puck along the boards; however, the opposing player skates directly perpendicular into the puck carrier and does not angle their check towards the boards, effectively delivering an “Open-Ice” hit to the player with the puck.
- 2) Any player guilty of Open-Ice hit shall automatically be assessed a double Minor penalty, with escalation to a Major and a Game Misconduct, or a Match penalty, at the discretion of the Referee.
- 3) A player is however able to plant their feet and step up on their opponent with a body-check along and into the boards to defend their space in the context of a hockey play when initially moving backwards or in quick transition only in close proximity.

Body Checking - Late Hit

A “late hit” is defined as a hit where the opponent has released the puck and the offending player does not make immediate contact with the opposing player. Immediate contact is best described as



contact occurring within a maximum distance of an arm and stick length between the puck carrier and the player delivering the check, at the instant the puck has been released

Charging

A double Minor, Major and Game Misconduct or a Match penalty, at the discretion of the Referee, based on the severity the impact, shall be assessed to any player who charges an opponent on the ice.

- 1) Jumps to check an opponent.
- 2) Builds up speed by taking two or more strides immediately prior to making contact.
- 3) Travels an excessive distance with the sole purpose of delivering such a hit.
- 4) Violently and unnecessarily checks an opponent in any manner.
- 5) Delivers a body check to an opponent's blind side.

The Referee, at their discretion, may assess a Minor, Major, or Game Misconduct penalties based on the observed intent of the check

Checking From Behind

When a player hits an opponent from behind and into the boards. This type of check is particularly hazardous due to the risk of head and neck injuries. It is penalized severely due to the potential for serious injury, often with a major penalty and a game misconduct, and possibly a match penalty if deemed deliberate with intent to injure.

A double Minor, Major and Game Misconduct or a Match penalty, at the discretion of the Referee, based on the severity the impact, shall be assessed to any player who intentionally pushes, body checks, or hits an opposing player from behind anywhere on the ice.

- 1) Where a player delivering a check makes contact with an opposing players back
- 2) In all circumstances the responsibility is on the player delivering the check to avoid contact to an opposing player's back.
- 3) At the discretion of the Referee, based on the severity of impact, the Referee may assess a Major penalty and Game Misconduct penalty for checking from behind.
- 4) A Major penalty will be assessed to any player who body-checks, hits or propels an opposing player in any manner from behind into the boards or goal frame
- 5) An attempt to injure will result in a Match penalty. A Match penalty will be assessed to any player who deliberately attempts to or deliberately injures an opponent by checking them from behind.
- 6) Any player who combines a Charging infraction with a Checking from Behind infraction will assessed a Match penalty and a X game (minimum) suspension followed by a hearing from the League

Head Contact

When a player making contact with an opponent's head, face, or neck using any part of their body,



equipment, or stick. Players are responsible for not endangering opponents who are in a vulnerable position. Penalties can range from Minor to Major and Game Misconduct, or even a Match penalty depending on the nature of the contact and whether it was deemed reckless or intentional.

- 1) There is no type of legal contact to the head, face, or neck.
- 2) Head contact may take the form of direct contact to the head or accidental contact
- 3) A Minor penalty will be assessed to any player who accidentally contacts an opponent in the head, face, or neck while delivering an otherwise legal body-check as defined by ORHL rules.
- 4) A double Minor penalty will be assessed to any player who
 - a. uses any part of their body or equipment to intentionally contact an opponent in the head, face or neck; or,
 - b. accidentally contacts an opponent in the head, face or neck while delivering an Illegal Body-Check, as defined by ORHL rules, that would otherwise have resulted in only a Minor penalty.
- 5) A Match penalty will be assessed to any player who hits a player in the head in such a way that the player is defenceless
- 6) A Match penalty will be assessed to any player who hits a player in the head with the intent to injure

Elbowing

When a player uses their elbow to hit or impede an opponent. This action is considered illegal and dangerous, leading to a penalty against the player who committed the elbowing. The enforcement of this rule helps to maintain the safety of the game by penalizing plays that could cause injury.

A Minor, double Minor, Major and Game Misconduct or a Match penalty, at the discretion of the Referee, based on the severity the impact, shall be assessed to any player who Elbows an opposing player.

- 1) Elbowing shall mean the use of an extended elbow in a manner that may or may not cause an injury.
- 2) A Major and Game Misconduct, shall be imposed on any player who uses his elbow to foul an opponent while delivering a body-check.
- 3) The Referee, at his discretion, may assess a Match penalty if, in his judgment, the player attempted to or deliberately injured his opponent by elbowing.