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ACTION BULLETIN No. 11 - 07

To: Hockey Manitoba On-Ice Officials
Board of Directors

Date: December 15, 2010

From: Ian Heather, Referee in Chief

Subject: **HIGH HITS – Checking to the Head**

I have been asked by President Brian Franklin and the Hockey Manitoba Board of Directors to issue this memo in light of a number of concerns regarding player injuries due to concussions both within our Branch and across Canada.

All Officials should be reminded of the Hockey Canada RULES EMPHASIS this year which is:

CHECKING TO THE HEAD – defined as: contact physically or with a stick to another player's head area.

- Deliberate checks to the head remain to be a major problem in today's game. Concussions not only deprive players of playing time, they end players' careers and can have long term effects.
- Checks to the Head demonstrate a lack of respect and fair play and must be penalized. Any moderate or severe blow to the head must be penalized with a Minor Penalty and Misconduct or a Major penalty and a Game Misconduct.
- Checking to the Head incidents result in our players suffering concussions and other more severe head injuries which is having a major impact on our game.

A Match penalty could also be assessed under this rule.

- The appropriate Checking to the Head penalty must be assessed in all situations where players deliberately target the head of their opponent. Aggressive fouls that have severe consequences for players who are on the receiving end of these undisciplined fouls. These types of infractions cannot and must not be tolerated at anytime throughout the game, no exceptions.
- Whether it is elbowing, high sticking, roughing or cross-checking, hits to the head are an intentional act of violence and must be treated with zero tolerance on the part of the official at all times.

It is important that everyone plays a role in supporting the improvement of our game.

Please tighten up your calls in this area and error on the side of caution! Thank you.