

In my opinion the problem with the rules of hockey is that the “penalty” for violating the player conduct rules is not spelled out clearly.

* The sanctions for player misconduct during a counter attack and inside of the 25 and inside of the circle fouls are not clearly spelled out. * What should happen if a specific violation occurs is not spelled out which results in interpretation of the rules.

** This causes controversy in countries like Italy where the umpires are notoriously bad and the players commit terrible fouls against one another with no sanction other than a free hit or PC (e.g. taking the shooter down before they shoot is common practice in Italy because most of the time a PC is given instead of a penalty flick). This results in poor play which percolates up to the national teams.

* Since the umpires do not have clear directions on the sanction for professional fouls and rough play they can use their own judgement to decide the sanction. This results in biased umpiring because the umpire does not have clear directions and the calls are subject to interpretation.

f** in countries like Italy this results in players not receiving cards under circumstances where in other countries they would receive a yellow or a red card. Without clear directions from the FIH on sanctions these types of countries will not develop their hockey.

The rules must define sanctions or guidelines (i.e. cards) for offenses. Obviously it is up to the umpires to interpret the situation. But without the following and more:

- * guidelines for sanctions in the rule book

- * videos showing the types of offenses that cards should result from

- * seminars explaining how players can commit a professional foul and rough play

- * how a player can hurt another player

- * how a player can cheat

Then we will continue to see team tactics developed around cheating and the umpires will be oblivious to what is going on on the field and no cards will be issued and not penalty corners will be given.

Examples:

- * a team can execute a team handball defense and physically block entry to the circle by the attacking team (e.g. Germany against Holland in the 2012 OG final, AUS vs all teams in the 2014 WC)

* the Dutch forwards holding Indian defenders to make a path for the Dutch ball carrier (don't believe me, ask the Indian assistant coach from 2006 for his video evidence)

* The Germans employing professional fouls to prevent the Belgians from generating an attack/momentum in the 2014 WC case study I sent you.

*Egregious violations such as professional fouls to stop the man on the break away by the last defender (e.g. in the 2004 OG's in Athens Mathew Wells/AUS stops a SA forward on the break. The umpire first gives a free hit. Then some of the enlightened fans start yelling professional foul and then the umpire gives the yellow card) are not spelled out clearly in the rules.

* Cirrilo/AUS straight arming the ball carrier to slow the ball carrier down

*The umpires need to be educated about the cynical fouls, dangerous play (e.g. 2014 WC a USA player slides into an ARG player near the sideline and carries them both off the field 7 yards-no card, Aymar on the dribble is sandwiched by Folgowski and Dawson-no card and I think that this was the play that resulted in Aymars hamstring injury-she was not the same after that play),

There is a long list of methods employed whereby teams are cheating. Cheating is a TACTIC employed by the savvy coaches who know that the umpires are not looking for these types of fouls on the field. I spoke to one top FIH umpire at the last WC and I asked him about the professional fouls. He said he was not aware that there were many professional fouls being committed. The smart coaches are cheating.

The FIH conduct of play rules are inadequate and do not begin to describe the types of play that players engage in that result in no sanctions.