



MEMORANDUM

March 10, 2026

VIA EMAIL

TO: NCAA Ice Hockey Conference Commissioners, Head Coaches, Coordinators of Officials, and Registered Officials.

FROM: Jeff Fulton
Secretary-Rules Editor, NCAA Ice Hockey Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: Rules Clarification – Missed Game Stoppage (Defending Team Responsibility)

Coaches and Officials,

This memo is to provide clarification regarding the application of the **Missed Game Stoppage Rule** and to highlight a recent play situation for educational purposes.

[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/wf2y81ocjai3i8bundgyf/UVM-v-ME-3-7-2026-p3-Goal - Coach s Challenge Missed Game Stoppage - No Goal 1.mp4?rlkey=p3ux2wlslje03emeto4bf8pf4&st=axex13vq&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/wf2y81ocjai3i8bundgyf/UVM-v-ME-3-7-2026-p3-Goal-Coach%20s%20Challenge%20Missed%20Game%20Stoppage-No%20Goal%201.mp4?rlkey=p3ux2wlslje03emeto4bf8pf4&st=axex13vq&dl=0)

In the situation above, a puck was shot into the offensive zone by the attacking team (**Vermont**). As the puck traveled along the boards near the bench area (in the offensive zone), a **Maine player on the bench made contact with the puck with his stick while the stick was extended into the playing area**. This action should have resulted in an immediate stoppage of play.

Play continued because the contact was not observed by the on-ice officials. Shortly thereafter, the attacking team scored a goal.

In this case, the action that should have resulted in the stoppage was **caused by the defending team (Maine)** when a player on their bench illegally contacted the puck with his stick. Because the missed stoppage was the result of an action by the defending team, **the defending team cannot benefit from that missed stoppage during video review**.

An important component of this rule is **which team caused the missed stoppage**.

As a result, the goal scored by the attacking team stands.

The intent of the missed game stoppage provision is not intended to allow a defending team to benefit from a play where they created the illegal condition that should have caused the stoppage.

Officials should be mindful of this principle when applying the missed game stoppage rule during video review.

Rule 93.4.B.5 Missed Game Stoppage - Missed Game Stoppage Event in the Offensive Zone Leading to a Goal - A play that results in a “GOAL” call on the ice where the defending team claims that the play should have been stopped by reason of any play occurring in the offensive zone that should have resulted in a play stoppage caused by the attacking team but did not. *The one exception to this provision is when the puck strikes the spectator netting caused by either team and goes unnoticed by the on-ice officials.*

Goals will only be reviewed for a potential Missed Game Stoppage Event in the Offensive Zone if the puck does not come out of the attacking zone again between the time of the Missed Game Stoppage Event in the Offensive Zone and the time the goal is scored.

Where the infraction at issue was a missed penalty call or icing subject to the judgment or discretion of the On-Ice Official(s), such infraction cannot result in the “GOAL” call on the ice being overturned, even if upon review, the On-Ice Official(s) would have made a different call.

If there are any questions regarding this interpretation, please feel free to reach out.

CC: Division I Men’s Ice Hockey Rules Subcommittee
Division I Women’s Ice Hockey Rules Subcommittee
Divisions II and III Men’s and Women’s Ice Hockey Rules Committee

JF:pa