



IIHF Rule 46 "Fighting" for the BNL

9th of October 2023

Concerning the practice games before the start of the competition, several reports / complaints have been received about the lack of consistency in sanctioning of on-ice fights. This leads to confusion and frustration when players, staff and fans experience different punishments being applied in similar situations.

It is obvious that referees might be different in judging on the same situations and one might be more strict than his colleague. But there must be clear rules as to what kind of penalties should in principle be imposed for in certain situations or actions.

Regarding "Fighting – IIHF Rule 46" the German, Dutch and Belgian referee representatives agree from now to use two basic rules, which are listed below.

How Rule 46.1 is to be used in de BeNe League:

1. Players who (want to) fight **may** be penalized with minor and/or major penalties.
2. Players who are ordered to stop or impede the linesmen **will additionally** be penalized with a Game Misconduct when they continue fighting. *(so in total 5+20)*

RULE 46 in simple words

RULE 46 FIGHTING

46.1. FIGHTING / FIGHTER – WILLINGNESS TO FIGHT AND CONTINUING TO FIGHT

"Fighting" is not part of international ice hockey's DNA.

Players who are willing to fight, shall be penalized **accordingly by the Referee(s)** and **may** be penalized with a Game Misconduct. Further Supplementary Discipline may be imposed.

Definition of a fight:

- when at least one (1) Player punches or attempts to punch an opponent repeatedly or
- when two (2) Players wrestle in such a manner as to make it difficult for the Linespersons to intervene and separate the combatants.

Any Player who **continues fighting or tries to continue fighting**, after they have been ordered by the Referee to stop, or who resists a Linesperson in the discharge of their duties shall, **by judgement of the Referee, incur at least a Major Penalty ("Fighting") plus an automatic Game Misconduct Penalty (5'+GMP)** in addition to any additional penalties imposed.

The Referees are provided very wide freedom in penalties they may impose under this rule. This is done intentionally to enable them to differentiate between the obvious degrees of responsibility of the participants either for starting the "fight or persisting in continuing the fight". The discretion provided should be exercised rationally.

Conclusion

By judgement of the referee(s):

- 1) Players who (want to) fight may be penalized with minor and or major penalties.**
- 2) Players who are ordered to stop or impede the linesmen may additionally be penalized with a Game Misconduct when they continue fighting.**
- 3) Further Supplementary Discipline may be imposed.**