



**CANADIAN HOCKEY  
ASSOCIATION  
CANADIENNE DE HOCKEY**

**Information Bulletin d'information**

**Bulletin No: 02/21**

**TO: Branch Executive Directors      INFO: Officers  
Branch Referees-in-Chief (02/15)      Branch Presidents  
Council Directors  
FILE: i02-21.doc      Life Members  
HDC Council Members (02/22)**

**DATE: December 7, 2001**

**FROM: Todd Jackson, Manager - Safety and Risk Management  
Maurice Roy, CHA Referee-in-Chief**

**SUBJECT: PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT - REMOVAL OF EAR GUARDS FROM  
HOCKEY HELMETS**

***(NOTE: This is a re-release of bulletin 02/10 with revised date to be enforced)***

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It has become apparent that in the 2000 – 2001 season, many players, especially at the Junior and Senior level, but also in other levels of hockey, were modifying their helmets by removing the earpieces. Since 1984, the CSA has required that helmets have no ear openings bigger than 38 mm (1.5 inches), or if they do, that an earpiece exist to provide additional protection.

Players, coaches, officials, administrators and parents are reminded that Canadian Hockey playing rule 24 (b) - Protective Equipment - states that "While on the ice, all players, including goaltenders, shall wear a CSA approved hockey helmet, to which a CSA approved facial protector must be securely attached and not altered in any way. Any alteration to a CSA approved helmet or facial protector automatically destroys the certification." Removal of earpieces is considered an alteration of the CSA approved helmet.

Coaches and safety people / trainers are instructed to ensure that their players do not remove earpieces or alter their helmets in any fashion. If the earpieces have been removed, they must be replaced or the helmet can not be used. Not only does the removal of earpieces cause a safety concern but also insurance coverage could be at risk if the equipment has been altered and an injury sustained as a result.

Officials should watch for infractions in pre-game warm-ups, and if it is clear that a player is playing with an altered helmet, advise the coach and player that if the player appears in the game with the earpieces removed from a helmet that came from the factory with such earpieces, they will be penalized for use of illegal equipment, without exception or warning as per Rule 24 (e) which reads as follows:

*(e) If the Referee's attention is drawn to the possibility that a facial protector or helmet may not be certified (CSA approved), or if the Referee observes that a facial protector or helmet may not be certified, and should that piece of equipment in effect turn out not to be certified, the Referee shall assess a Minor penalty and at the same time order that illegal piece of equipment removed from the game.*

*(Note 1): The Referee is empowered to make the call without his attention being drawn by an opposing player or team official, through the Captain.*

If there is some question as to whether the helmet has been altered, the Referee shall report the infraction on the official game report to the President.

Please note that it is expected that coaches and safety people / trainers will look after ensuring their players are using helmets that comply to the above CHA standards. For the officials, this is not an optional or judgement call, and the onus to ensure players comply with the rules in this area falls on the coaches.

Executive Directors are asked to forward this safety concern to coaches, trainers, safety people and administrators within the Branch to give this message the widest circulation possible.

**By September 1, 2002, all leagues should have received this info and ensure their teams have complied. Full enforcement of this rule will start as of this date.**

If there are any questions or concerns related to this bulletin, please do not hesitate to contact Norm Dueck, CHA Manager of Officiating at (403) 777 – 4587 or Todd Jackson Manager of Safety and Risk Management at (613) 562-5677 extension 2323.

Sincerely,



Maurice Roy  
CHA, Referee-In-Chief

Sincerely,



Todd Jackson  
Manager, Safety and Risk Management