

NHL Board of Governors Approves Blindside Hits Rule

Written by Matthew Coller
Wednesday, 24 March 2010 07:06



The NHL's board of governors must have been watching when Philadelphia Flyers forward Mike Richards blindsided Florida Panthers forward David Booth. They must have seen the replays of Pittsburgh's Matt Cooke slamming into the unsuspecting Bruins star Marc Savard. They must have because the board of governors unanimously approved the proposed penalty that would ban hits to the head against an unsuspecting player.

[USA Today](#) reported Tuesday that the NHL released a statement saying the timing and details of implementation are being worked out by the league's hockey operations department and the players' Association.

This, however, does not mean we'll have a rule in place tomorrow. Under the current collective bargaining agreement, the new rule needs approval from a 10-man competition committee. That committee is made up of five players, four general managers and Philadelphia Flyers owner Ed Snider.

"The league's proposal cannot take effect until it first receives the support of the joint NHLPA/NHL competition committee, and then is endorsed by the NHL board of governors," the players' association said in a statement.

"As we have previously stated, the NHLPA's competition committee members are finalizing their response to the NHL's proposal regarding blindside hits to the head and will be responding back to the league this week."

Here are some things to consider as far as details go for the new blindside hits rule:

-Assuming the rule is approved, when will it go into effect? Should and will are two different stories. The rule should go into effect immediately after being approved. It would be crazy to say, "Get your shots in now, because next week that's illegal." Will it go into effect immediately? It took a lockout for the NHL to change the two-line pass rule. Most would

NHL Board of Governors Approves Blindside Hits Rule

Written by Matthew Collier

Wednesday, 24 March 2010 07:06

probably settle for the rule taking effect come playoff time.

-Will there be an automatic suspension and fine? If the league follows precedent set by the instigator rule, it will implement (at very least) an automatic fine for a blindside hit. The instigator rule, which is when a player instigates a fight in the final five minutes of the game, carries the penalty of a one-game suspension and \$10,000 fine to the player and coach.

-Will it stick? Ottawa Senators forward Jason Spezza called the rule a “Band-Aid fix for the rest of the year.” We get the feeling everyone wants something in place and they want it now even if it isn’t perfect. If the rule is implemented this season, it will have a different look come next October.

OTHER NEWS FROM THE BUSINESS OF SPORTS

NETWORK

(THE BIZ OF BASEBALL)

- [How Tom Hicks Became the Most Hated Man in Baseball](#)
- [The Biz of Baseball Adds MLB Club Affiliation Info to Minor League Attendance Database](#)
- [Strasburg to Double-A Also About Protecting the Pocketbook for the Nationals](#)
- [LWIB: MLBAM Follow-Up, Live In-Market Streaming, Renovations to Wrigley, MLB Network, Plus Tidbits](#)
- [Twins Sign Joe Mauer to 8-Year, \\$184 Million Extension](#)

NHL Board of Governors Approves Blindside Hits Rule

Written by Matthew Coller

Wednesday, 24 March 2010 07:06

Matthew Coller is a staff member of the Business of Sports Network, and is a freelance writer. He can be [followed on Twitter](#)

[Follow The Biz of Hockey on Twitter](#) 



[Follow the Business of Sports Network on Facebook](#)