

**Yogi Quote of the Week:**  
**“If you don’t set goals, you can’t regret not reaching them”**

**Rule 205 Change of Players** (from USA Hockey 2007-2009 Official Rules and Casebook)

- a) Players may be changed at any time from the players’ bench, provided that the player or players leaving the ice shall always be at the players’ bench and out of the play before any change is made.

If, in the course of making a substitution, either the player entering or leaving the game deliberately plays the puck with the stick, skates or hands, or checks or makes any physical contact with an opposing player while the retiring player is actually on the ice, then a bench minor penalty for “too many players on the ice” will be called.

*(Note) If, in the course of a substitution, either the player entering the ice or the player retiring is struck by the puck accidentally, the play will not be stopped and no penalty will be called.*

(The following are the interpretations of Pat L. and may or may not represent the opinions of Pat B., Ben or Yogi Berra)

Throughout the great and glorious history of Thunder we have had numerous (and I mean numerous) problems with this rule. Most of the time it happens because we are not paying attention to whom we substitute for and we see people coming for a change and assume our person is at the bench. D’oh! Wrong! So we skate around for up to a minute or so with an extra player until either the refs notice or we discreetly (or not so discreetly) get someone back to the bench. Therefore we need to make an extra mental effort to know who we substitute for and make sure they are at the bench before venturing out onto the ice to take their place. A good solid hockey player will notice relatively quickly when there are too many players on the ice, as a team we need to be more aware of the whole ice, both our team and the opposing team and not just focus on the puck.

Another common problem with this rule is that people tend to hop right off the bench and play the puck when the person they are substituting for is not off the ice yet (see above – **at the player’s bench and out of the play**). As a team we have to realize that this can mean different places depending on where the play is taking place (generally the location of the puck). If the play is in the corner of the attacking zone **far away from the bench** then at the player’s bench and out of the play means pretty much the area in front of the bench that is outside the refs peripheral vision (so anywhere between 5-15 feet; anymore than about 15 feet would be pushing it). Don’t get tunnel vision, check out where the play is, where your person is, the location of any cherry pickers from the other team and the location of refs and make your decision on when to leave.

If play (the puck) is right outside the bench area, then at the player's bench and out of the play means the player entering the ice can not deliberately touch the puck or deliberately make physical contact with an opposing player until the person they are replacing is actually in/on the bench, meaning **both skates off the ice**. Remember the referee does not know the exact player you are substituting for, so if more than 2 people are changing with play near the bench it may look like "too many players on the ice" to them. So it is a good idea to try to avoid changing at this point. This, of course, does not always work out so the player entering the ice has to be heads up and not intentionally touch the puck or the opposing team until the teammate has her skates off the ice.

And then sometimes it is just the coaches' fault.

If you have any questions or need clarification just let me know and I'll see what I can come up with.

~ Pat