

## 2022 Umpire Meeting – Rule Clarification

- **GAME START** - Teams are to both run on to centre of the field, 2 minutes prior to time commencement. This is to bring back the opportunity for umpires to clarify with captains/teams game expectations, correct & proper 'toss' for ball/direction selection, for umpires to check players equipment (mouthguards/shin pads), and return to a level of sportsmanship that has been lacking due to COVID.
- **CAPTAINS** – It is not always easy to identify Captains, Umpires are to request each team captain wears a 'captain band' or identifying feature.
- **PENALTY CORNERS** – On the awarding of a penalty corner, umpires are directed to NOT blow their whistle to indicate the injector may push the ball. Umpires will ensure defence is set, all other players are beyond the half way line, co-umpire is in position, attacking players are outside of the circle and when they are ready for play to begin, they will look at the injector and loudly say PLAY. The word PLAY is the only directive to be given to ensure consistency amongst umpires, teams & games.
- **Penalty Corner awarded within 23m Area – OUTSIDE of the Circle**

All umpires were advised that if a deliberate infringement occurs outside the circle, yet within the 23m area, a Penalty Corner is to be given and the offending player MUST be issued the appropriate personal penalty (Green or Yellow Card). The card is at the umpire's discretion and is to remain consistent throughout the game.
- **23M Area Free Hit (Attack)** All free hits awarded to the attacking team within the 23m area, the ball MUST travel 5m prior to entering the circle. In the event that the ball is hit directly into the circle, a free hit is to be awarded to the opposition. The current rule is, it is to be taken from the original free hit spot.
- **TACKLES** – Player tackles were discussed at length. Nathan Wright advised he had spoken with 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Captains prior to umpiring their match and advised both captains that NO tackles from behind will be permitted.

Umpires are to take a much stronger approach to the dangerous tackles within games. A tackle that takes a player to the ground MUST attract a Yellow Card minimum 5-minute suspension.

Tackling from behind is seen as a very dangerous maneuver, unless a clean tackle is made without interference to opponent (bodily or stick), and NO danger is caused to either player, this type of tackle will result in the offending player being penalised and all efforts to avoid danger MUST be made by the umpire.

**(FIH RULES - 9.13** Players must not tackle unless in a position to play the ball without body contact. Reckless play, such as sliding tackles and other overly physical challenges by field players, which take an opponent to ground and which have the potential to cause injury should attract appropriate match and personal penalties.)
- **AERIAL BALLS** – HA & HNSW have forwarded a directive (Included) regarding umpiring aerial balls. In addition to the clarification included, it was discussed and agreed that an umpire should designate the receiving team whilst the ball is in the air. Umpires are to loudly and clearly indicate the receiving team prior to the ball 'landing'. If in doubt, the call is to be awarded to defence.

**(FIH RULE 9.10** Players must not approach within 5 metres of an opponent receiving a falling raised ball until it has been received, controlled and is on the ground. The ball may be intercepted within 5 metres but outside of playing distance provided it is done safely. The initial receiver has a right to the ball. If it is not clear which player is the initial receiver, the player of the team which raised the ball must allow the opponent to receive it.)

- **ADVANTAGE** – Umpires are to very clearly physically (Arm pointed in direction of the team receiving advantage) & verbally “Play One – Advantage” indicate when they are playing advantage. Advantage is to be applied when an offence occurs, yet the attacking player has the opportunity to progress their play. Should play not be able to be progressed, No advantage is applied and the original penalty is to be awarded with the free hit to be played.
  - **FIH RULES – Objectives - 2.2 Advantage:**
    - a** It is not necessary for every offence to be penalised when no benefit is gained by the offender; unnecessary interruptions to the flow of the match cause undue delay and irritation
    - b** when the Rules have been broken, an umpire must apply advantage if this is the most severe penalty
    - c** possession of the ball does not automatically mean there is an advantage; for advantage to apply, the player/team with the ball must be able to develop their play
    - d** having decided to play advantage, a second opportunity must not be given by reverting to the original penalty
    - e** it is important to anticipate the flow of the match, to look beyond the action of the moment and to be aware of potential developments in the match.
- **COMMUNICATION** – It was highlighted that Umpires are to increase their levels of on and off field communication. Prior to awarding a Goal, umpires should glance at their opposite for confirmation/denial of the goal being awarded. Similarly, umpires should position themselves to be able to signal and assist their fellow umpire with decisions. A pre-game discussion with game focus should be held where possible between the two umpires.
- **STICKCHECK** – Prior to calling stickcheck, think about the tackle and the direction the ball travels, not just the noise. Noise does not = stickcheck.
- **FIH excerpt - Rule 7.4.c:** ball intentionally played over the backline by a defender 7 and no goal is scored. If it is clear that the action is intentional, umpires should not hesitate to award a penalty corner. Rule 9.12: obstruction. Umpires should penalise shielding the ball with the stick more strictly. They should also look out for a tackling player who by pushing or leaning on an opponent causes them to lose possession of the ball.
- **FIH excerpt - Rule 13.2.a:** ball stationary at a free hit. Umpires are sometimes not strict enough on requiring the ball to be stationary, albeit very briefly, for a free hit especially if it is taken using a self-pass.
- **FIH excerpt – Rule 2.7** A player who is injured or bleeding must leave the field unless medical reasons prevent this and must not return until wounds have been covered; players must not wear blood-stained clothing.
- **FIH Excerpt – Rule 9.6** Players must not hit the ball hard on the forehand with the edge of the stick.
- **PLAYER’S DRINKING** – If an Umpire believes that a player has been consuming alcohol before or during a match they may request that the player does not participate in the game.
- **UMPIRE RIGHTS** An umpire has the right at all times to refuse to umpire a game if they feel that there is potential danger or aggression. Umpires may extract themselves and walk away from the game. (At all times, prior to these measures being taken, it is strongly recommended that team captains are consulted to be given the opportunity to take control of the situation at hand.)  
 Every umpire has the right to feel safe and protected, and to be able to umpire the game to their best of their ability without the fear of abuse, aggression, negativity or an unsafe environment.  
 If the Umpire is a Junior (U18 years), they are advised to contact an Executive Member, Senior Umpire or senior member of their club for support.

## **HOCKEY AUSTRALIA (HA) & HOCKEY NEW SOUTH WALES (HNSW) DIRECTIVE**

### **RE: Rule Changes for 2022**

Dear Member Association (MA) Officiating Representatives

The FIH has release the following rule changes for the 2022 season:

**Rule 4.2** was changed to allow for defending players using Penalty Corner protective equipment to continue to play the ball outside the circle after intercepting during the taking of a penalty corner. Players can now continue to run with the ball while keeping their protective equipment on, but they must remove that same equipment immediately after the first opportunity to do so and always inside the 23 m area. No player using PC protective equipment can play the ball outside the 23 m area at any time.

Hockey Australia guidelines:

**Rule 4.2** - removal of PCD gear, the umpires are encouraged to keep communicating with the players to remove their gear at the earliest opportunity. A free hit is giving if a player plays the ball outside the 23m area with their gear still on. The free hit is taken outside the 23m area.

**NO SELF PASS IS PERMITTED**, only a quick pass to a team mate to restart play

**Rule 9.10** was changed to allow for the playing of what is commonly designated as Aerial Balls. The previous text did cover for the possibility for players to safely intercept a falling ball, which is now seen as both legitimate and positive to the development of the game. Aerial Balls will continue to be closely monitored by all stakeholders so that player safety can be maintained.:

**Rule 9.10** - danger remains the key element, again the level of skill in the game would determine the danger element, do not over think this and rather err on the side of caution. Timing is key.

The FIH Rules Committee continues to be concerned that some Rules are not applied consistently.

**Rule 7.4.c:** ball intentionally played over the backline by a defender and no goal is scored. If it is clear that the action is intentional, umpires should not hesitate to award a penalty corner. (***for intentionally playing the ball over the back-line by a defender*** **Goalkeepers** are permitted to deflect the ball with their stick, protective equipment or any part of their body in any direction including over the back-line.

**Rule 9.12:** obstruction. Umpires should penalise shielding the ball with the stick more strictly. They should also look out for a tackling player who by pushing or leaning on an opponent causes them to lose possession of the ball.

Players must not obstruct an opponent who is attempting to play the ball.  
Players obstruct if they: – back into an opponent – physically interfere with the stick or body of an opponent – shield the ball from a legitimate tackle with their stick or any part of their body.  
A stationary player receiving the ball is permitted to face in any direction.  
A player with the ball is permitted to move off with it in any direction except bodily into an opponent or into a position between the ball and an opponent who is within playing distance of the ball and attempting to play it.  
A player who runs in front of or blocks an opponent to stop them legitimately playing or attempting to play the ball is obstructing (this is third party or shadow obstruction). This also applies if an attacker runs across or blocks defenders (including the goalkeeper) when a penalty corner is being taken.

**Rule 13.2.a:** ball stationary at a free hit. Umpires are sometimes not strict enough on requiring the ball to be stationary, albeit very briefly, for a free hit especially if it is taken using a self-pass.

The 2022 Rules of Hockey are now in the FIH website [HERE](#).

**Hockey Australia guidelines:**

We strive for consistency throughout all MA's, Associations, Clubs and Schools, including all senior, junior and social programs, so please distribute to the relevant groups within your organisation, including the team coaches, managers, players, volunteers and parents.

It is vital that we maintain open dialogue with the hockey community.

Do not overthink the rules and use common sense for each level that we umpire. A Premier League game will be handled very differently to a lower level or social game.

If you have any questions in relation to the rule changes and/or the interpretations, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0447186 477, or via email at [blair.chalmers@hockey.org.au](mailto:blair.chalmers@hockey.org.au). I will then forward the query onto the most appropriate person within the HA Officiating Advisory Group.

Warm regards,

*Blair Chalmers*

Blair Chalmers

**Senior Manager - Participation and Engagement**