



SHF Briefing Notes to Teams & Umpires

Punctuality Pre-Match Preparation & Attire

- Umpires are reminded to arrive early at the venue. Umpires Rules specify **20 minutes before a game**; however try to be there as early as possible to prepare themselves.
- Umpires are encouraged to have a **pre-match discussion**, and warm up together if possible.
- Umpires must be properly attired. Umpire shirts tucked into black pants. Male Umpires must wear a belt. For female umpires socks rolled up to just below the knees.
- Prior to start of game ensure that there is no equipment in the goal

Goalkeepers and Players

- Teams have two options.
- They can play with a goalkeeper who must wear at least headgear, leg guards and kicker.
- Or they can play with 11 outfield players. Rule 2.2 of the Rules of Hockey states that when a team chooses to play with only field players then these players are not permitted to wear any head gear when defending penalty corners or penalty strokes. They can only wear face masks when defending penalty corners and penalty strokes.

Stick over shoulder

- Playing of the ball over the shoulder is **allowed in all divisions**. This should be decided on the element of danger which is caused by such action.
- Umpires will judge the playing of the ball above the shoulder solely on the danger that it presents. This might depend if there are other players in close proximity and the ball is played forward instead of being brought down in a controlled manner.
- This rule is **NOT** permitted in schools tournaments.

Free hits within the 23m area

- Free hit is **taken at the spot** where the offence occurred, even if it is just outside the shooting circle. **Umpires will be firm with this.**

Under Rule 13.2.f, for free hits awarded to the attacking team inside the 23m area, **all players must be 5m away** from the ball, EXCEPT that defenders standing in the circle who were within 5 metres of where the offence took place need not move. If the hit is taken immediately, these players who are standing within 5 metres and in the circle may show the player who has taken the self pass, but cannot play or attempt to play the ball or to influence play until the ball has travelled 5 metres, or has been touched by another defending player (who can legitimately play the ball). **This is to be interpreted strictly.** If the defenders infringe think about the penalty. If it was deliberate or repeated then a penalty corner may be appropriate. Otherwise a re-take and a personal penalty may be appropriate.

- **If time is stopped**, for any circumstance, then all players except the player taking the hit **MUST** be 5 metres away from ball.
- It is permitted to play the ball high over the circle so that it lands outside the circle provide that there is no danger.
- The **ball must travel 5m** or be touched by a player of the **DEFENDING TEAM** (who can legitimately play the ball) before being played into the circle.

Free hits in the Circle

- A defending team may take a free hit awarded in the circle anywhere in the circle up to 15m from the backline. However, it must be inline with where the infringement took place and parallel to the side line.

Free hit between the 23m areas

- No need to ensure that it is at the exact spot where the infringement took place. So long as there is no significant advantage(s) gained to the team taking the free hit, play will be **allowed to go on to encourage the game to flow.**

Tackles

- The tackler should only be trying to play the ball (not the opponent)
- Not all stick tackles are fouls or intentional. Umpires have been briefed to carefully observe where the foul occurred instead of listening to the sound of stick coming together. **A good indicator is the direction the ball runs after the tackle.**
- **Physical contest for the ball can be allowed.** However **“playing the opponent”** should not be tolerated and penalized with a team and personal penalty. An example of “playing the opponent” would be pushing the opponent so the player falls to the ground. (please however be mindful of “simulations”)
- **Body checks and sliding tackles which “take out” a player** may cause serious injury and are to be **dealt with severely** with a personal penalty (yellow card and at least 10 minute suspension). The objective is to protect skills and skillful players.

- If a player slides in and takes the ball **BUT** also takes out the player then it should be a yellow card to the player who has slid in.

Obstruction

- Look to see if the player is preventing the opponent from playing the ball. This can be done in many ways e.g. by using the leg, using the body or using the stick. (A trend spotted are attacking players ‘crab-crawling’ along the base line towards goal by using their legs to block / prevent a legitimate tackle from the defenders.)
- Backing into an opponent and shielding the ball from a legitimate tackle is obstruction. Pay attention to players attempting the reverse stick hit. If they shield the ball from a defender, it is obstruction.

Advantage

- Umpires have been encouraged to play as much advantage as possible. And **communicate to the players** that you are playing advantage. Use the hand gesture for this and tell them by calling “play on”, so that teams are aware of their intentions.

Team Penalty v Personal Penalty

- Team penalty is the award of a free hit or penalty corner or penalty stroke, it affects the team as they have to defend this.
- Personal penalty is a caution either verbal or with a card.
- There can be situations where you can award a team penalty followed by a personal penalty.
- A breaking or poor tackle in the 23m area need not give rise to an award of a penalty corner (team penalty) and a card (personal penalty), e.g. a stick check near the corner flag would not necessarily have prevented progress into the circle and a free hit and a card might be a better option.

Lofted/Ariel Ball & Ball off the Ground

- Where the ball is lofted into a crowd the penalty is against the team which caused the ball to be raised. The rule of thumb is to look to see if players are **within 5m of each other**
- Even if two players are standing within 5m of each other a free hit should be awarded against the team that caused the ball to be raised. Judge this during the flight of the ball and as it is dropping. Look to see where the ball is going to drop and **do not be distracted by looking at the ball when it is in the air.**

- Generally the inclination is to award the free hit to the defender. However if the forward is the one who had moved to the ball first and the defender was trailing, then it is the defender who has caused the danger and the free hit should be awarded to the forward
- A lofted ball to an attacker in the Circle can result in a penalty corner being awarded if the goalkeeper encroaches within 5 meters and prevents the attacker from playing the ball. Look to see if the goalkeeper was more than 5 meters away as the ball was dropping.
- If a player is within 5 meters of the initial receiver receiving a lofted ball, but he/she is **behind/beside with no intention to influence the initial receiver**, there may be no need to penalize the play. Allow the receiver to trap the ball safely.
- When the player (initial receiver from the aerial flick) was allowed to play the ball over the shoulder but this player receiving the ball displays poor skill in bringing the ball down under control, **then this player who causes danger due to his poor skill should be penalized** instead of the player who allowed the initial receiver to receive the ball and then attempt to come within 5m and play the ball.
- A raised ball (no matter from a hit or aerial flick) in the shooting circle where there are players of both teams within 5m of each other, must be penalized **immediately** (do not wait for the ball to drop) with a free hit to the defence (if ball raised by an attacker) or penalty corner (if ball raised by defence).
- Otherwise where the ball is raised to a height **below the knee**, it is generally not considered to be dangerous and there is no need to penalize. If the ball hits a player below the knee, the general award is a free hit against that player for use of feet. If it is unintentional and no significant advantage is gained when a ball roll onto a foot, then there is no need to penalize and play on. This interpretation will depend solely on the playing distance of the other team's player whether if he/she is able to reach and contest for the ball, usually within 5 meters of the ball. If he or she is able to, then a penalty should be awarded against the team using the feet to gain an advantage or lack of skill to control the ball.

Penalty Corner Procedure

- Defenders who **persistently** take a long time to take position for a penalty corner consume playing time and may be cautioned accordingly.
- The player injecting the ball for the penalty corner must have at least one foot outside the Circle.
- Therefore be proactive and inform defenders to put on masks and take position on the goal line in a timely manner. Time is now stopped between the award of and taking of

a penalty corner. Rule 13.3 of the Rules of Hockey states that it is re-started when teams are ready. So umpires should blow the whistle to re-start time once the defenders are behind the goal line and the pusher is ready to inject the ball. **Consider a green card** for defenders who are making no effort to take position quickly. Only **40 seconds** should be allowed for teams to be ready, so umpires should be pro-active and remind players to be ready. A PC can be played out before 40 seconds if both teams are set and ready to play, there is no need to wait for 40 seconds to be over before the Umpires commence play.

- Differentiate between a **re-take** of a penalty corner and an award of a **penalty corner**. Read Rule 13.5 of the Rules of Hockey on when a penalty corner is over. If a penalty corner is not over any award of a penalty corner is a re-take. This is important when a defender has been sent to the half line for breaking the line. In a re-take the defending team must still defend with less than that number of defenders.
- The ball **must travel outside the attacking circle** before a goal can be scored. **It is not an infringement** to take a shot at goal if the ball has not travelled outside the circle, if the ball goes into the goal, then it is a 15m (16 yard) hit to the defence, i.e., it is not a goal.
- If protective gear is dropped in the Circle and is hit by the ball, then a penalty corner is awarded. If the ball goes in the goal, a goal is awarded.
- If protective gear is dropped elsewhere than the Circle and is hit by the ball, then a free hit is awarded to the attacking team.
- Players should endeavor to remove protective headgear as soon as the penalty corner is over, but under no circumstances is it to be worn outside the 23m area. If the protective headgear is worn outside the 23m area, it is to be penalized with a free hit to the attacking team to be taken just outside the 23m area.
- A penalty corner is over only when the scenarios described in Rule 13.5 occur.

Appeal, Dissent & Verbal Abuse

- Umpires will not accept or tolerate any verbal abuse directed at them, their colleague or opponents.
- Umpires are briefed to deal with verbal abuse **early and promptly** as misconduct.
- Use the coloured cards or a verbal warning. It is possible to upgrade a free hit to a penalty corner or to reverse an award of a free hit for excessive appealing or dissent.
- If the coach, managers or any members of the team is giving problems on the bench area and the reserve or the technical officer is not able to control him/her, then **the captain can be cautioned and sent off for failure to carry out his duty to control his/her team.**

Use of Colour Cards

- Cards are not only personal penalties but also signals to all players on both teams & to spectators
- If players are misbehaving, and Umpires have used your other management control tool then cards will be shown.
- The minimum period of suspension for a yellow card is 5 minutes. This can be increased if the player continues to misbehave in the “sin bin”

Dangerous Play

- Players must not lift their stick over the head of other players. Penalise these offences early with a caution and upgrade the caution to a suspension if it is repeated.
- Players must not play the ball dangerously or in a way which leads to dangerous play. **A ball is considered dangerous when it causes legitimate evasive action by players.**

Captains

- The Rules of Hockey are clear on this. Every team must have a captain and the captain **must wear an arm band or some similar distinctive article.**
- Arm bands and ribbons and pins are provided in the bag. Ensure that the team captains use them. Make it a point to check this before the start of the game and get the captains to collect the armband or ribbon from the reserve umpire or technical delegate.
- Please be reminded that Captains are responsible for the conduct of all players and their management and coaching staff. Captain can be cautioned for misbehavior of players from his team, himself or any member on his team bench that includes the Team manager, coaches and even physiotherapy. **If a captain is suspended then the arm band or ribbon must be passed to the person who is replacing as captain until the suspension is over.**

Penalty Strokes

- It is no longer necessary to ask the goalkeeper and the striker if they are ready. So long as the striker is within playing distance of the ball and the goalkeeper is standing on the line blow the whistle.
- If the goalkeeper prevents a goal being scored by moving off the goal-line before the stroke is taken, then the stroke must be re-taken. The goalkeeper should be suspended for this offence

- If the goalkeeper remains on the same spot or moves the feet on that same spot and subsequently saves the stroke, there is no infringement and there is then a free hit out to the defence.

Duties of Reserve Umpire & Technical Delegate

- The reserve umpire or technical officer is empowered under the Tournament Rules to caution and/or suspend a player, or official on the team bench. The reserve must assist the two umpires on the pitch by maintaining the discipline of the team benches.
- If there are serious cases of misconduct with respect to the officials will submit a report to the Tournament Committee for further disciplinary action to be taken. (This is in addition to the caution or suspension that you have given for that particular match)
- Subject to games where there is no technical officer, the reserve umpire will have the following additional duties. Timing of carded players, recording of carded players, carded players details, and timings of 40s

Communication with players

- **Umpires have been encouraged get into the habit** of communicating with players when it is necessary to clarify a decision. This is not to say that an umpire should be talking to players throughout a game or engage in a lengthy discussion for every decision taken.
- We understand and also spoken to our umpiring team that communicating with players builds a relationship and helps to “sell decisions” as players would understand what you want from them and are aware of what are and are not acceptable.

Technical Area

- The two sets of team reserves must be stationed at the pitch level on either side of the technical table. Players or officials must be seated on the team bench and **on the team bench side of the perimeter fence of the pitch.**
- Players should only be allowed to cross beyond the perimeter fence if they are substituting. After substituting they should return to the bench. **Coaches and Managers should not be allowed to stand outside the perimeter fence**, this can lead to interference with the umpires and must be controlled.

12 players on the pitch

- If there are 12 players on the pitch, the captain and the player who came on should be sent off with a yellow card. The team will then play with 9 players.

- If a goal has been scored and it is subsequently discovered that there were 12 players on the pitch, the goal cannot be disallowed if the game has been re-started. If the game has not been re-started then the goal can be disallowed.
- Same will apply to award of penalty corners and penalty strokes.

Substitution

- All substitutions are to take place within 5 metres of the center line.

Crowding of Umpire

- Only the captain / or solely 1 player of the team should be querying the umpire.
- If more than one player crowd the umpire, then the captain or the player encroaching towards the umpire will be sent off.
- If the crowding is repeated constantly then the captain would be given a yellow card for failure to control his/her team.

Corner Hits and Free Hits

- Where the ball is hit directly into the circle from a Corner, the free hit is taken from outside the Circle and not on the 23m line.
- Take note of and use the **new signal for Corners** (page 49 para 4.3(c) Rules of Hockey 2017)

SHF Umpires Committee – January 2019