

Directions to Umpires 2015

Based on a recommendation from the FIH Rules Committee, the FIH Executive Board has agreed to changes to the Rules of Hockey.

Playing the ball above the shoulder - The ability to play the ball with the stick above the shoulder has been in top level International hockey for well over a year. The skills of players to be able to control and play the ball above shoulder height have dramatically improved over a short period of time, and adds another dimension and set of skills to the game. Any safety fears at various levels or age groups in competitions below top domestic National League level may be allayed by the possibility for associations to opt out of the rule. However, we feel this is a positive extension of the game. It will therefore be up to players to stay to work within the 'spirit of this rule' in order for us to keep this rule.



- Umpires are to penalise players only if the ball comes down into a dangerous situation. In such cases, a free hit will be awarded to the opposition team. Interpretation will be much the same as for overhead situation which drops into group of players from both teams.
- A player bringing the ball down must not be penalised if their stick is not motionless or is travelling towards the ball while attempting to stop the ball. Only if the ball is genuinely hit while above shoulder height should the player be penalised.
- Players are not to see this as an opportunity to swing wildly. In such cases where a player 'wild' swings and connects with the ball (baseball style), a strong penalty eg yellow card should be awarded. Safety of players is paramount.

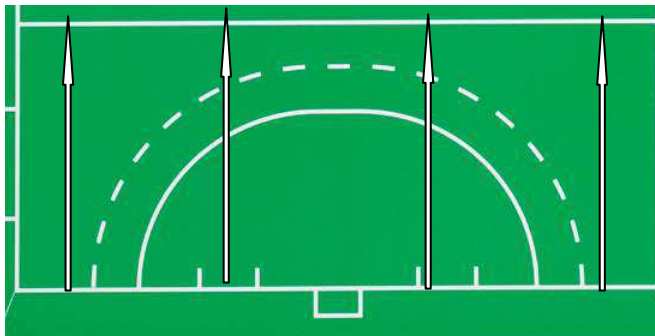
Two further Rules changes have been included.

The first is the ability to take attacking free hits, awarded within 5 metres of the edge of the circle, from the point of the offence.

- The ball still has to travel at least 5 metres before it can be played into the circle, or alternatively has to be touched by another player of either team, other than the player taking the free hit.
- Having to take the ball back to the 5 metres dotted line slowed the play and was seen as a real disadvantage to the attacking team and the flow of the game.

The second change concerns the re-start after the ball has unintentionally been played over the back-line by a defender or deflected by a goalkeeper or player with goalkeeping privileges, and no goal is scored.

- Play will now be re-started with the ball on the 23 metres line and in line with where it crossed the back-line. The previous re-start, commonly known as a corner, was seen as an inefficient and ineffective re-start with the ball often becoming trapped in the corners of the pitch.
- Taking the re-start from the 23 metres line opens up the play and gives more passing options.



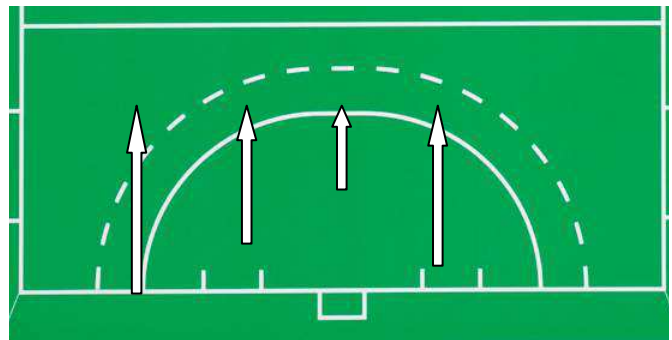
The ability to bring a free hit by up to 10 metres has been deleted. This has become redundant with the new free hit Rules and the ability to self-pass, while any other misconduct can be managed using other Rules or personal penalties.

Rule Reminders

- Experimental **Own Goal Rule** will **no longer be played** therefore:
- 8.1 A goal is scored when the ball is played within the circle by an attacker and does not travel outside the circle before passing completely over the goal-line and under the crossbar.

- The ball can now be raised intentionally but safely directly from a free hit/re-start situation using a push, flick or scoop action (***but NOT from a HIT***)
- At a free hit which is not a self pass, the ball is ***NO LONGER required to move 1m*** before it can be played by a team mate
- ***If time expires*** just before an umpire would otherwise have made a decision, umpires are permitted to make that decision immediately after the end of the first half or the end of the match.
 - A goal may be awarded provided the ball crossed the goal line before time expired
 - A PC, PS or personal penalty may be given for an offence that occurred immediately before time expired
 - A wrong decision made immediately before time may also be corrected

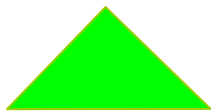
- Defenders ***no longer*** have the option of ***taking a free hit*** awarded in the circle “***anywhere in the circle***”.
- The ***free hit*** should now be ***taken anywhere up to 15 metres from the backline in line with the location of the offence***. I.e same application as for 15m (16yd) hit.



- Rules 7.4 and 9.7 have been reinforced for consistency. Rule 7.4.c says that if the ***ball is intentionally played over the backline by a defender*** and no goal is scored, play is re-started with a penalty corner. ***If it is clear*** that the action is intentional, ***umpires should not hesitate to award a penalty corner***.

Other Directions as per 2014

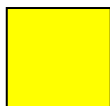
Green Card Ruling



This rule will continue during 2015. The ruling has provided umpires with the opportunity to reinforce the importance of a green card. It is NOT a replacement for a yellow card offence.

- Any player who is given a green card must leave the field immediately for a period of 2 minutes.
- The timing of the 2 minutes will begin as soon as the player is seated at the technical bench however the match should resume immediately ie the umpire should not wait until the player leaves the field before re-starting play. This will help alleviate any unnecessary delays due to the green card.
- Any delays on the part of the carded player should be treated as misconduct and umpires should consider a further upgrade to a yellow card.
- The team with the player who has been given a green card will play with one less player for the duration ie they cannot replace this player
- If a goal keeper is green carded, teams have the following options:
 - Substitute with a second keeper if one is padded up and ready to go, however this means another field player must leave the field of play to ensure one less player is on the field.
 - Replace with a kicking fullback who must have a different coloured shirt (normal kicking fullback rules apply)
 - Play without any GK privileges
 - Once again, the important thing is that there are no unnecessary delays. Umpires should re-start play immediately after green card has been shown, however, ***umpires should use their discretion in regards to safety in the case of GKs.*** GK should leave the field over the backline or sideline then move to dugout.
- The carded player can return to the field as soon as the technical bench signals that the 2 minutes are up. Normal interchange rules apply to ensure no further interruptions to the game. ***MM can walk with GK towards backline at end of 2 minutes to ensure minimum interruption to game***

Yellow Card Ruling



Umpires now do not have to wait until a player has left the field before re-starting play after the awarding of a yellow card.

Note: Umpires can re-start play when they feel that it is appropriate to do so.

- ***The aim of this is to avoid long stoppages of play***

13.2 g The Self-play free hit

Note: The free hit, centre pass, and putting the ball back into play, (sideline “long corner” and 15m hit). All these are now grouped together and shall be interpreted in a similar manner.

The team taking the free hit:

A player must make two clear motions.

The player must make an attempt to stop the ball first. This is seen as the first touch and the second is the take off. Even a dribble away sees the ball leave the stick in some fashion so the main thing is that we, as umpires, see a definite attempt to stop the ball first.

Another thing to consider is the ball placement. Often the whistle goes after the player has moved forward from the infringement. Therefore it is important that the umpire ensures there is no significant advantage paid with a quick 'play on'. In many cases the ball will have to be brought back a bit, ie closer to where the infringement occurred. This will ensure enough of a 'stoppage' in play before the 'self play' occurs. Do not overdo this as the aim of this rule is to allow flow. See 13.1

The idea of the rule is to allow 'flow' without gaining an unfair advantage. Any unnecessary interruption to the flow of the game from an umpire will only cause frustration for players and coaches.

- A free hit is not taken if a player just dribbles off with the ball.
- It is now possible for a player to “self-pass” and “throw an overhead pass”. (Be sure the ball is safe on the way up. This includes safety to players who have not had time to move 5 metres.)
- The ball must move 5 metres from the re-start position before going into the circle, however, this can be in any direction including theoretically a 5x1m Indian dribble.

Note: *Players from the same team do not have to be 5m from the free hit except in the attacking 23m area. If a player from the attacking team is within 5m but clearly not influencing play then allow play to proceed.*

Note: *A team with the free hit does not have to wait for opposition players to move 5 metres from where the free hit is to be taken.*

Note: Penalties: *If a free hit is not taken correctly a free hit the other way can be given (Be proactive – avoid replays & reversals).*

Note: *Opposition Players must move 5 metres from where the free hit is to be taken. This must be done without any delay.*

Self-Play continued: Umpires must take action for players deliberately “standing over the ball” or “hitting the ball away” to prevent a free hit from being taken – this is “gamesmanship”.

Penalties for such actions will be the same as we have enforced in the past. A warning (Verbal or green) may be appropriate unless the action is clearly intentional and affects the game the temporary suspension should be enforced (5 minute Yellow card).

Umpires must be very proactive in moving players 5 metres from free hits (Verbal and whistling) - avoid replays & reversals

Opposition players cannot interfere with the play until they have retreated the 5 metres from where the free hit is to be taken.

Note: *Playing the ball in any way, "getting in the way" or "running next" to the ball carrier who has taken a self play free hit is not acceptable.*

Note: *Be aware of teams taking a self-play free hit manufacturing interference from opposition players.*

13.1 Location of a free hit (Proximity to the breach of the rules and the taking of a free hit.)

1. ***Very open play (not in the attacking 23 area):***
If there are no opposition players directly contesting the free hit - allow the free to be taken in the general proximity of the area.
2. ***Opposition players contesting the free hit.***
The free hit must be taken within playing distance from where the breach occurred.
3. ***Inside the 23m area:***
The free hit must be taken close to the spot where the free hit occurred.
4. ***Inside the dotted circle:***
The ball must be taken back to the nearest point 5 metres from the circle.
5. ***Sideline hits and “long corners”***
Players taking the free hit must attempt to put the ball on the line.
6. ***Defensive free-hits & 16s are as per the previously existing rules.***

Penalties: *Players who intentionally take free hits when the ball is clearly too far away from the true location can have the free hit reversed.*

Free hits for attackers taken inside the attacking 23 metre area.

Note: This is very simple and should be applied as directed: (consider the new rule application here...a greater level of management may be needed early on to ensure the defence understand the importance of backing of 5m very quickly)

- All players other than the player playing the ball must be 5 metres from the ball when the free hit is taken. This includes bringing the ball back into play. Players who are not 'influencing' play should not be unnecessarily penalised.
- At a self play free hit, the ball must travel at least 5 metres in any direction before it is played into or through the circle.

Note: *Hard hits or pushes passing the ball to a team mate who deflects the ball into the circles is permitted. Be aware of dangerous/ out of control high deflections*

Note: *A player can "self pass" and then dribble directly into the circle, or pass the ball into the circle once the ball has moved 5 metres in any direction from where the free hit was taken.*

Note: *Umpires must be proactive – if the ball is in the wrong spot communicate this to the players before they have the chance to take the free hit. (Avoid replays/reversals)*

9.10 Overhead or Aerial Balls

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 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 the ball. (note: in a contested situation umpires should consider there to be 'no' initial receiver)
- Umpires are encouraged to 'scan early' in overhead situations. If the ball looks like landing in amongst players blow early and award a free to the opposing team.
- If a player was in position to receive the ball and another player rushes in to 'make a contest' then the initial player should be awarded the free
- If both teams are racing towards ball then it should be considered a contested situation and a free awarded to the opposing team.



Penalty Corners

The non-controlling umpire should stand approximately 5 metres off the centre line in line with the left post.



- Umpires are then in a very good position to check the height and direction of the first shot. They may also have a good view of any obstruction (shielding) by either the attack or defence
- They are also in a good position to see if the ball hits a runner above or below the knee on the first shot. If the runner is within 5 metres and is hit below the knee then another penalty should be awarded
- If the runner is hit above the knee and is within 5 metres then a free hit to the defence should be awarded on the basis of danger
- Umpires should control the breaking at both the circle and goal line. An early warning should be followed up with cards. Breaking does not warrant a penalty stroke

Note: If the player taking the Penalty Corner from the backline does not have at least 1 foot outside the field: **THE PC IS TAKEN AGAIN.**

Penalty Corners & Time

Penalty Corners are played out at half and full time even if the PC has started before the final siren. A PC during these occasions is considered over when one of the following occurs:



- A goal is scored
- An offence by the defence results in a further PC
- An offence by the defence results in a Penalty Stroke
- An offence by the attacking team
- Ball is accidentally deflected over the backline
- Ball leaves the circle for a second time
- Ball goes beyond the dotted 5m line

In general play (ie not during extra time) a PC is completed as above except for the second last point ie the ball can go outside the circle more than once in these situations but as soon as the ball goes beyond the 5m line the PC is over.

14.2. Breaking at Penalty Corner

- Until the ball has been played, no attacker other than the one taking the push or hit from the back-line is permitted to enter the circle and no defender is permitted to cross the centre-line or back-line.
- For any offence of this rule by a *defender*, the *offending player(s) shall be required to go beyond the centre-line and cannot be replaced by another defender*. Note: if the goal keeper breaks then a defender other than the keeper shall be required to go beyond the centreline.
- For an offence of this rule by an *attacker* who enters the circle before the ball is played, the offending player(s) *shall be required to go beyond the centre line. THE PC IS TAKEN AGAIN*.
- The player who pushes or hits the ball from the back-line must not feint at playing the ball.
- **NOTE: Umpires must be absolutely convinced that there is no feint on the part of the person pushing the ball out.**
- **NOTE: For an offence of this rule the offending player must go to the centreline but can be replaced by another attacker with no penalty to the defence.**



Scoring a goal from a Penalty Corner

If the ball does not go outside the circle on a penalty corner the attacking team should not be penalised as soon as they have a shot on goal. The main thing for an umpire to remember is that a *goal cannot be scored on a PC until the ball has left the circle*. If the ball does not leave the circle and an attacker has a shot on goal the following applies:



- If the ball goes into goal directly off an attacker it is a 16yd hit
- If the ball goes into goal off a defender it is a long corner
- If the ball hits a defenders leg on the line it is not a stroke but a penalty corner

Goalkeeper

Teams may choose any of the following options:

1. A goal keeper with goalkeeping privileges wearing full protective equipment (*normal rules apply for this situation with GK only allowed to participate in play within their 23 metre area except when taking a penalty stroke*)
2. A goal keeper with goalkeeping privileges wearing only protective headgear and a different coloured shirt. (*In this situation the GK can only participate in play within their 23 metre area while wearing protective headgear however they may remove the headgear and place it behind goals and participate anywhere on the field. The protective headgear must be worn during a penalty corner and penalty stroke*)
3. Only field players and no player with goal keeping privileges and therefore no players wearing protective gear or different coloured shirt. (*in a penalty corner situation defenders may use close fitting facemasks but not full protective headgear*)



Note: Teams may change between these options by making a substitution but not during a PC or PS

Goalkeeping

When the **ball is inside the circle** they are defending and they have their **stick in their hand**, goalkeepers are permitted to do the following:



- Use their stick, protective equipment or any part of their body to push the ball away, deflect the ball (in any direction including over the backline) or stop the ball
- This permits a goalkeeper to use their hands, arms or any other part of their body to move the ball away but only as a part of a goal saving action and not to propel the ball forcefully so that it travels a long distance
- A reminder to umpires that should the deflection or clearance create danger than a penalty corner should be awarded

Use of Body to Play the Ball

Field players must not intentionally stop, kick, propel, pick up, throw or carry the ball with any part of their body. **HOWEVER**, it is not always an offence if the ball hits the foot, hand or body of a field player.

- A reminder that it is not illegal to play the ball with the hand while the hand is on the stick. ie the hand is considered to be part of the stick.

The Hit

It is illegal to hit the ball with the front hook of the stick. ie like a tomahawk but in a forehand stroke.. A free hit should immediately be awarded to the opposition.

- This rule does not prohibit the use of the edge of the stick on the forehand in a controlled action in a tackle, when raising the ball in a controlled way over an opponents stick or over a goalkeeper who is lying on the ground or when using a long pushing motion along the ground
- Players must not play the ball with the back of their stick however in the situation where a spinning ball accidentally hits the back of the stick and basically does not move then the player should not be penalised
- Only when the ball is played with the back of the stick should a player be penalised. Ie there is significant movement of the ball from a back stick hit

Stick raised above the head at Penalty Corner

— *see ruling at beginning of Directions*

Defenders are permitted to use the stick to stop or deflect a shot at goal at any height

- Defenders should not be penalised if their stick is not motionless when making such a save.
- If the defender stops or deflects a ball travelling towards goal but which would have missed the goal then a penalty corner should be awarded (*not a penalty stroke*) **NOTE: This ruling only applies to those leagues who are not playing the 'stick above shoulder' rule.**
- If danger results, after the defender legitimately plays the ball in the air then a PC should be awarded.



Penalty Bully

- In a penalty bully situation, for example after an injury stops play, the bully is one touch and players do not have to be 'onside'



Penalty Strokes:

The player must begin behind and within playing distance of the ball but is no longer limited to taking just one step. It is important to note that using a dragging action is still not permitted.



- If the Penalty Stroke is taken before the whistle is blown and a goal is scored: **THE PS IS TAKEN AGAIN.**
- If the PS is taken before the whistle is blown and a goal is not scored: **A FREE HIT IS AWARDED TO THE DEFENCE.**
- For any offence by the player defending the PS, including moving either foot before the ball has been played: **THE PS IS TAKEN AGAIN** – However, if a goal is scored even though there has been an offence by the defending player then the goal is awarded.

Dangerous play

Raised balls should only be penalised if they are deemed to be dangerous or lead to danger

- It is not an offence to raise the ball unintentionally from a hit, including a free hit, anywhere on the field unless it is dangerous
- Players must not intentionally raise the ball off a hit except for a shot on goal. A deliberate chip (reverse or forehand) should therefore be penalised
- There is no rule that says you cannot lift the ball into the circle. Danger is the only interpretation
- The free hit should be taken 'where the action causing the danger occurs'. Normally on a lofted ball it is dangerous when it is coming down to land amongst players therefore should be taken where it lands. The exception to this is on the ball that is deflected by a defender and lands dangerously in the circle. In this situation the free should be taken outside the circle. Normally in a dangerous free hit situation the ball should be taken from where the free hit was taken.



Obstruction

The player trying to get at the ball must be within playing distance. Basically once the ball goes beyond a stick length it should be play on. The push and charge through a player trying to force the obstruction has all but disappeared.

- A player cannot use their body to shield the ball however, the tackler must be trying to make a legitimate tackle before the person with the ball is penalised.
- A player may tackle from any position including from behind. The important thing to note is that the tackler must not interfere with either the body or the stick of the person with the ball. If the tackler cleanly gets the ball (regardless of how awkward it may look) then no offence has occurred



*The rules of hockey umpiring are far from black and white.
Above all be consistent in your interpretations*

***The basic aim of umpiring...
PROTECT THE PLAYERS,
PROTECT THE GAME!!***

***Umpires/coaches and players should note that these directions
are by no means a full summary of the rules of the game.
Further interpretations may be gained from the 2015 FIH Rule
Book available through local associations.***