

BRIEFING for Swiss Hockey Umpires Season 2017-2018

It is important that umpires know and are able to apply the latest version of the FIH rules of hockey. This briefing complements these rules and emphasizes the way in which rules should be interpreted. For topics that are not specifically mentioned in this briefing, the FIH Rules of hockey must be followed in full.

This document replaces ALL previous briefings.

Game Management

- It is wonderful not to stop the flow of the game unnecessarily for a foul if giving advantage is the better option, however this should never happen at the expense of control over the game. Discuss beforehand with your colleague, how you are going to control the game and discuss different scenarios that might happen during the game. Allowing the flow of the game can often result in beautiful and spectacular hockey. Sometimes, however, not blowing a foul for the sake of flow can result in messy hockey and in those situations it is wiser to give the free hit. The signal you send to the players is in that situation more important than the interruption of the flow of the game.
- Be alert of often small fouls (often by attacking players), immediately after a team loses control of ball which might result in a quick break. These usually unintentional and innocent looking fouls have often only one purpose: to make sure that the attack cannot continue. We call these fouls 'breaking down of play'. Learn to recognise these fouls, and often just giving the foul is not enough. An additional clear signal is warranted in the form of a strong oral warning or a card.
- In modern hockey we are increasingly confronted with fouls of players when the ball is not nearby (including pulling at a player's shirt or pushing); It is important that the umpires work together to adequately punish these kind of offense. With these so-called "off-the-ball incidents", a personal punishment (warning, card) is in place and should not result in the team being punished by for example rewarding a penalty corner when the foul occurs outside the circle within the 23 meter zone.
- Coaches and team officials are there to coach and support their team and not to criticise or coach the umpire. This kind of behaviour is not part of the hockey tradition and should be stopped. The umpire at the dugout side of the field is the one responsible. If a coach does not behave as is to be expected from him or her, first of all give a warning in passing. If that does not work, give a clear warning for everybody to see. The next step will be a green card, which signals that your limit has been reached. This green card is just a signal and there is no other penalty involved. This is different for a yellow card. A yellow card for a coach or one of the other non-playing members of the team results in a 10 minute penalty where the coach needs to go behind the fence and is not allowed to coach or instruct the team during this time. On top of this, the team will play with one player less during this time. In case of a red card the coach has to leave the vicinity of the playing field and the team will need to play with one player less during the remainder of the game.

Restarting the match

- The signal for indicating a long corner was changed last season. First point the way you were used to, to the corner flag. Then you draw with the same arm, stretched and horizontal, an imaginary line from where the ball went over the backline to the place on the 23-meter line where the ball should be taken.
- Make sure that the corner is actually taken **on** the 23 meter line.
- A free hit needs to be visibly controlled (however the ball does not need to be dead still before it is taken).

- A free hit must be taken in the vicinity where the foul occurs.
- If you see that the ball will not be controlled or is taken in the wrong place, you can correct this before the ball is taken. You can do this a few times in the game to make the players aware that you are serious in enforcing these rules. However, if you are too late and the game resumed, you are left with **only two options: 1. Let the game continue; 2. A free hit for the other team.** This free hit is taken at the spot where the player wrongly restarted the match.
- An attacking free hit needs to be taken inside the 23-meter area if this is where the foul occurred. If the player tries to take it outside the 23 you can correct this once twice (see above). If the foul was just outside the 23-meter area and the attacker wants to take it inside, let them. However, the rules of a free hit inside the 23 will apply in that case.
- In an attacking free hit taken inside the 23-meter area, the ball cannot be played directly into the circle before the ball has rolled five meters or has been touched by a player of the defending side.
- An attacking free hit within five meters of the circle is taken at the place where the foul occurred. All players other than the one who takes the free hit must be at least five meters away from where the ball is taken. Defenders who were within 5 meters when the foul was committed, are allowed to defend in the circle at less than five meters distance from the ball. The players that are in the circle within 5 meters of the ball when the free hit is taken are not allowed to actively interfere or play the ball till the ball is touched by a second player or the ball has travelled at least five meters. It is allowed to follow the attacker inside the circle as long as no attempt is made to play the ball. As soon as the ball has travelled five meters or is touched by a second player, a defender is allowed to interfere or play the ball. If after a foul in the 23 meters the time is stopped **all players (except for the one taking the free hit) must be at least five meters** from ball when the game is restarted.

Penalty Corner

- Before, during and after a penalty corner, a lot happens in and around the circle. Rules are sometimes broken when attackers run into the circle and defenders run towards the ball or take their defensive positions. Discuss prior to the match with your colleague who watches what and how to communicate between each other.
- Only the circle umpire is really able to assess if the ball is stopped inside or outside the circle, and it is normally "technically impossible" for the other umpire to accurately assess this.
- The rules state what is considered a shot on goal. Additional to the rule we agree that; if a penalty corner misses or would have missed the goal and hits a defender above the knee; this is considered dangerous and results in a free hit for the defence.
- As long as the penalty corner situation has not ended, in accordance with Rule 13.5 and 13.6, the penalty corner is considered as **re-taken**. Which means that no substitutions can take place and that any defenders or attackers that were sent to the middle line, need to remain there. These defenders and attackers can only re-join the penalty corner when a new penalty corner is awarded. E.g. when the ball hits a foot of a defender during a penalty corner, the subsequent penalty corner is considered to be retaken and is not considered a new penalty corner.
- Field players are allowed to wear a smooth mask while defending a penalty corner as long as the penalty corner lasts and as long as the defender is in his own circle. A defender is allowed to complete a defensive action, even if this means that he is (just) out of the circle (common sense). If a player participates in the game while still wearing a mask, he is penalized with a free hit against. If he

or she repeatedly does so, a personal punishment is appropriate. It is not allowed to quickly restart the game while wearing a mask. When you think that this might happen; correct it in time.

(Receiving a) high ball

- It is now allowed to play a ball that is above shoulder height, this can however only be done if this does not lead to dangerous situations. For your decision, the position of all players determines when the ball leaves the ground. The moment you blow your whistle is determined by the position of the players when the ball is received. Once you see that players are close to each other and there will definitely be a duel for the ball then you will have to blow your whistle; since this will lead to a dangerous situation. A player is allowed to stop or play a ball which is over shoulder height. In that case, the player concerned must ensure that this is not dangerous. As soon as there is danger to the other party because a player playing a ball over shoulder height, a foul must be given.

Personal penalties

- In earlier briefings, the rule was used as "stopping the time = Giving a card". In modern hockey, stopping the time is an additional management tool towards players, captains or team leaders. Depending on the situation, this may be a card but could also be a warning or a "good conversation". The new rule is thus "Stopping time = a good management moment".
- A green card means a temporary removal of that player for two minutes. A yellow card means a temporary removal for five or ten minutes. The umpires time the penalty and announce when the penalty time is over and the player (or his replacement) may return. After the penalty is over, the player may always return, even if a penalty corner is awarded ("time is time"). The only exception to this is that we do not allow a player to return if the umpire is about to release a penalty corner. In that case, you wait for the player to return till after the penalty corner is released. This is only a few seconds later. Communicate with your colleague and solve this as a team.
- The second green card is always yellow. For the sake of clear communication, first show the second green card and then the yellow card immediately. The penalty for a second green (and thus yellow) card is five minutes.
- The penalty time for a yellow card is in principle five minutes. Only for a physical violation, **aimed at the body**, the punishment is ten minutes.
- A sliding is allowed in hockey, provided the ball is played and the opponent is not touched. In this case, the risk lies entirely with the person who uses the sliding. If he only plays the ball then it is beautiful but the opponent is touched then this is always a foul. A sliding where the opponent falls or can only prevent himself from falling due to pure skill or luck is considered a deliberate foul and the correct penalty for this is a 10-minute yellow card. Note that attackers in the circle also make a sliding on a tip-in. Here the same rule applies.
- A player who receives a second yellow card - whether for the same type of violation or for another - will **first** get a **yellow**, **followed** by a **red card**. The red is shown to clearly indicate that this is a suspension for the rest of the game. Both cards are listed as yellow on the game report. There is a big difference between 2 yellow cards and a real gross violation of the rules. If an offense is so serious that you as an Umpire are of the opinion that the offender deserves a permanent removal, make this clear by giving the offender only a red card.
- Each player may ask an umpire why a particular decision is taken or not, provided that this is done in a decent and normal manner. This is no longer reserved to the captain. However, it is one player that may do so. Two players or more are seen as **group protests** and the 'second' player in question

is immediately punished with a **green card**. It is not the captain who gets the card but the second player that approaches the umpire. We will try to limit cards by calling immediately "one player" supported by a raising one finger.

Coaches and team officials

- It happens too often that there are too many officials in the dugout. Each team is allowed to have up to 5 substitute players and 4 team officials (including the coach) in the dugout.
- The majority of team officials behave well and refrain from making comments with regards to the umpiring. However, the exceptions and certainly reactions which are not purely emotional must be clearly dealt with. A team official who deliberately insults the arbitration or who continues to interfere or shows theatrical non-verbal displeasure must be punished. This can be done by giving a warning in the form of a green card. A green card for a team official does not lead to a time penalty. If this does not help or is insufficient then yellow follows (10 minutes time penalty).
- A coach who walks onto the pitch because he does not agree with a decision of an umpire gets yellow without warning and insulting an umpire means red.
- A time penalty for a team official is really a serious punishment for a team, for they will need to play with **one player less** during the penalty period. This makes it a very effective measure, for just the threat of getting a yellow or red card is often enough for the official to change his or her behaviour. By managing this well as umpire, many team officials will change their behaviour in time to prevent a yellow or red card.

Goal Keepers

- Time is stopped to allow a team to change from a fully dressed goal keeper to a field player with goal keeping privileges. However no time is allowed to swap gear, so if a team chooses to play without substitute fully dressed goal keeper, they have only one option: a player with goal keeping privileges' (however the team is of course free to swap the gear outside the pitch to another player while game continues).

Personal protective equipment

• **REMARK:** *The rules state: "players are recommended to wear shin, ankle and mouth protection". In many national competitions the shin guards are mandatory and we see this more and more happen with mouth guards as well. For the players protection I would suggest to make shin guards mandatory at all levels and mouth guards for youth players U18 and younger.*

All field players are required to wear shin guards and players in the youth competitions also need to wear mouth protection. If a player is not wearing shin guards when he wants to enter the field, you should not allow him to do so as an umpire. If you see that someone in the field is not wearing his shin guards, please correct this as soon as play allows or have the player substituted. In short: "Without shin guards you do not play" however there is no personal penalty associated with not wearing shin guards!

- Field players are allowed to wear knee protectors while defending a penalty corner. These, like shin guards, must be fully covered by the socks of the defender. Knee protectors do not need to be covered by the defenders socks if they have the same colour as the socks .

Working together

- Show that you are the third team in the field. Explain clearly what you mean when asking your colleague for advice and do not hesitate to do so if you need advice.
- Two see more than one. The teams don't care who takes the decision, as long as the correct decision is taken in the end. It is easier for the teams to accept that you both didn't see it, than a mistake by a stubborn umpire who was too proud to ask his colleague's opinion. Eye contact or a simple gesture is often sufficient. Don't say things like "He / she has seen it" or "That's his / her decision". You make decisions and communicate as a team.
- Only consult with your colleague if you think he could have seen the incident from his position. You can often judge from the reaction of your colleague's if it makes sense to consult. If your colleague hasn't seen it or cannot help you, it is up to you to make your own decision. In that case clearly communicate your decision to the teams.
- Players understand that not every umpire is equally brilliant every week, but where they are struggling is when they do not know where they stand. It is therefore important to be consistent and predictable, week in week out.
- Everybody makes mistakes. The way you handle this often determines how you are accepted in the rest of the match. So leave the moment behind you and focus on the next decisions you have to take. Do not be afraid to admit that you made a mistake. That only reinforces acceptance by players.
- Learn to recognize when something has happened that you obviously have not seen. If you understand the game, you can often see the reaction of players when something unusual happened. These are the times when you need to be prepared to make a decision. If you have not seen it yourself, you can always have a quick look at your colleague to see if he can help.
- With the introduction of the self-pass, the game has become faster, which increased the need for rapid anticipation and assuming a good positioning is now of major importance. This requires an excellent condition from each umpire and for the umpiring team even better pre-match talk about positioning and working together.

Good luck and enjoy the upcoming season