



NATIONAL UMPIRES BRIEFING SEASON 2016/17

Welcome to the 2016/17 season and to this briefing. Last season was a landmark edition in the history of Irish hockey with the inaugural EYHL and, of course, the Irish men's team qualifying for Olympics in Rio.

The Olympics showcased our sport and opened it up to a large audience in Ireland. It also highlighted the high standard of umpiring, something we should all aspire to.



RULE CHANGES 2016/17

➤ **No Rule Changes**



So time for some housekeeping and tidy a few things up!!

SO WHAT DO WE NEED TO TIDY UP?

Last season saw a number of new rules introduced which helped improve our sport as a spectacle. However, some aspects of the new rules were not applied consistently while existing rules were also not applied consistently. The Rio 2016 briefing highlighted a number of issues which will be dealt with in this briefing so the main areas we are going to concentrate on are:

- Stick above the shoulder – players deliberately encroaching to break down play**
- Free within 5m of the circle**
- Shirt and stick pulling**
- Players protesting & crowding**
- Use of face masks**
- Obstruction - still exists!!**

Stick above the shoulder

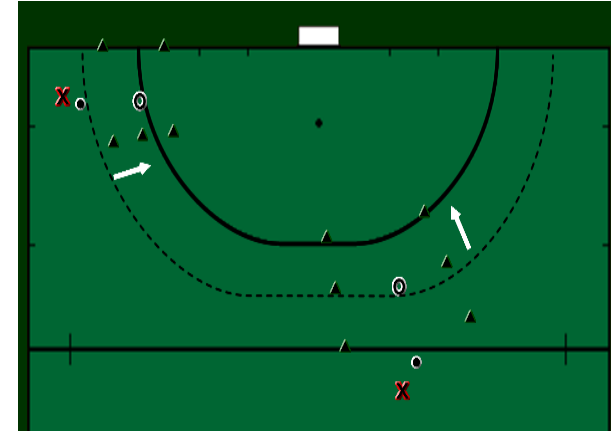
- The biggest issue is the timing of a decision. Too often we are blowing too late and allow dangerous situations develop.
 - After an aerial pass has been made, focus immediately on the landing zone.
 - *make the usual judgement on the initial receiver.*
 - *the landing zone may change because players are able to receive the ball earlier.*
 - *the game dynamic is changed, but still use player movement over the flight of the ball to give the indication as to who is the initial receiver. Don't ball watch!!*
 - If a player successfully controls a raised ball in the air, then that player must be allowed space (5m) to control the ball on the ground. Too often defenders encroach as soon as the ball hits the ground! If you feel a player had encroached deliberately, punish as a deliberate break down
 - If two opposing players are close together and there is no clear initial receiver, then blow quickly and award a free hit to the team who did not raise the ball.



Free Hits Within Five Metres of the Circle

➤ Too often players 5m or more are being allowed to encroach so just a refresher!

- A free hit can be taken within 5m of the edge of the circle.
- The ball must travel at least 5 metres from the point of the free hit (not necessarily in a single direction) before the player taking a self -pass or another attacker can play the ball into the circle
- Alternatively the ball must be touched by a defending player before either it enters or can be played into the circle by any other attacking player, including the player who took the free hit
- (if the free hit travels directly into the circle without having being touched for a 2nd time, the resulting free hit to the defence is taken from the place where the original free hit was taken from).



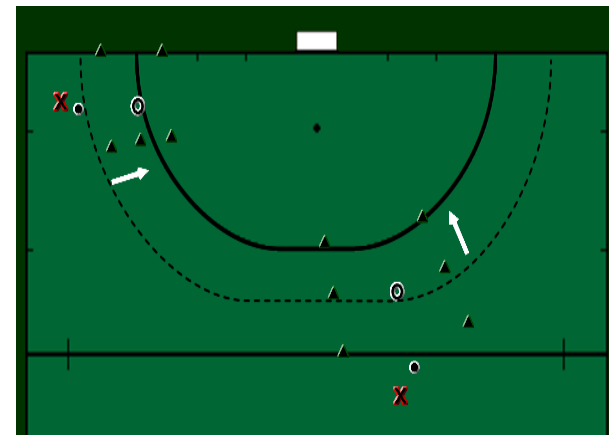
➤ Applying the rule

- Just as anywhere else, the free hit may be taken immediately, even though other players are not 5m away. However, those players must not interfere with play

Free Hits Within Five Metres of the Circle

➤ Applying the rule change (cont.)

- Defenders not 5m away, but inside the circle, are not required to retreat 5m.
 - *the attacker who self passes cannot dribble directly into the circle and so the defenders in this case are not interfering.*
- Defenders may shadow around the inside of the circle, provided that they do not interfere with play, until the ball has gone 5m or been touched by another player.
 - *players inside the circle who were 5 metres or more from the point of the free hit may not encroach or form a “defensive wall.”* Too often players 5m or more are being allowed to encroach
- Interfering with play from such a free hit will be a PC
 - *Be aware of attackers trying to “buy” a PC by running into an innocent defender*



Shirt and Stick Pulling

There is an increasing tendency for players to indulge in shirt and stick pulling (remember the Rio briefing and the incidents of shirt pulling!).

These should be dealt with as break downs and dealt with accordingly.

It is important that you discuss this with your colleague and watch each others backs.

PLAYERS PROTESTING

Players protests, both verbal and in gestures, are spoiling the image of the game. We all need to work together and avoid unnecessary pressure on players and umpires. The captain is responsible for the behaviour of his team members and management. Umpires will be forced to take appropriate action, if necessary.



Action:

- The IHUA has decided to adopt the FIH guidelines used at the Rio Olympics:

Players' misconduct towards Umpires (including crowding of Umpires) is one of the key problem areas for the presentation of our sport. This often occurs after the award of goals, penalty strokes and penalty corners, as well as prior to, during and after, Video Referrals. The guidance to Umpires is not to allow more than one player, preferably the captain, to approach them. Any other (i.e. second or more) players approaching are liable to green card personal penalties. Repeat offences may result in yellow card personal penalties.

At the EYHL briefing, the teams will be asked to buy into what we are trying to do

PLAYERS PROTESTING

However, it is recognised that there may be an exceptional situation whereby a player may wish to ask a reason why a contentious decision was given. In this case only one player, preferably the captain, will be allowed to approach an umpire to seek clarification on a decision provided that player behaves in a reasonable manner. Any other player approaching an umpire to protest is liable to receive a green card and repeat offences by the same team will result in a yellow card.

Important

This does not provide 'carte blanche' for every decision to be queried. Repeat querying of decisions will be deemed as protesting and should be dealt with accordingly.

Use of Face Masks

- Defenders are permitted to wear a smooth preferably transparent or white but otherwise single coloured face mask or metal grill face mask, which follows the contours of the face, when **defending** a penalty corner or penalty stroke.
- All other use of the mask is banned in all senior, junior, indoor and outdoor hockey. All players, team managers, technical officials and umpires need to be aware of this (FIH Medical Committee).

Use of Face Masks

➤ Penalty Corners

- Players **CAN** wear the mask for the duration of the penalty corner when they are **DEFENDING** the circle. In the act of **defending** a penalty corner, **do not penalise** the defender if he/she steps outside the circle in the act of clearing.
- However, once the ball passes beyond the 5 metre line the penalty corner is “over” and the player can **no longer** play the ball with the face mask on.
- **Action: Free hit to the attack.**
- When the penalty corner is “over” - the defenders are no longer defending the PC and therefore they **cannot** play the ball with their face mask on.
- **Action: The play cannot proceed. Clearly warn the player that they cannot play the ball with the face mask on. Re-start the game with a free hit to the defence. Be proactive, if possible. Do NOT award penalty corners or reverse hits!**
- **For repeated offences penalise with a personal penalty (green card).** Again, try to be proactive.

Obstruction – It still exists!!

- **Are the players trying to play the ball?**
- **Is there a possibility to play the ball?**
- **Is there active movement to prevent the playing of the ball? Backing in?**
- **Be aware of professional use of the body to illegally block opponents from the ball, as well players trying to demonstrate obstruction by lifting their sticks dangerously over opponents' heads**
- **Stick obstruction is a 'hot issue' for players. Judge it fairly and correctly and blow only if you are 100% sure. Watch the natural movement of the stick**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION AND ENJOY
YOUR SEASON!**

