



**Minutes of Committee Meeting held on
Sunday 7th June 2020 @ 10:00am
via Conference Call**

Present: Chair - Warren McCully (WMcC), Vice Chair – Rob Argent (RA), Alison Keogh (AK), Simon MacAllister (SMcA), Christine Reid (CR), Tom Goode (TG), Peter Murphy (PM), Kim Collins (KC), Robert Johnston (RJ).

Apologies: Geoff Conn (GC).

The meeting was conducted via conference call due to the on-going coronavirus pandemic. WMcC welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

1. The minutes of the previous meeting, having been circulated to all members in advance, were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

2. A draft paper has been produced on a protocol for members appointed to international tournaments or EHF development programs. It still requires a little work to complete it in consultation with Hockey Ireland regarding booking of tournament travel. Jerome Pels has been emailed. On-going. **ACTION: WMcC**
3. Two provincial reports received: Munster and Leinster; both disseminated to the Committee; Connacht report received at last meeting. No report received from Ulster.
4. RA submitted a new paper covering travel and subsistence guidance for umpires. One further amendment is required on clarity for members. On-going. **ACTION: RA**
5. Bad Weather Procedure proposals to be sent to Hockey Ireland. **ACTION: RJ**
6. WMcC reported that the paper regarding enforcing the 20-minute Cool-Off Period and the new Code of Conduct Form was sent to HI Competitions. Paper on urinating needs further work to confirm its final wording. **ACTION: WMcC to update and disseminate to Committee.**
7. GC to deliver document, and present framed shirt, to Sedgwick thanking them for their sponsorship support and including a schedule of all we've done to promote their brand. On-going due to Covid-19. **ACTION: GC**
8. It was agreed to revisit the misconduct issues discussed at the last meeting prior to the start of next season whenever that may be. **ACTION: All**
9. All other action points were closed or are covered later in these minutes.



Correspondence

10. Hockey Ireland's Interprovincial Working Group confirmed postponement of the u16/u18 interpros in September 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions. They are targeting late October for rescheduling the Girls tournament in Ulster and Boys in Leinster. See later under 'Grading & Selection' for further details.
11. EHF indoor umpire nominations for 2020/21 were completed by TG.
12. There was a short discussion about the response from LHUA to the Leinster Provincial Board's letter on EYHL2 proposals which had not been copied to LHUA. Liaison is now on-going. WMcC pointed out that the introduction of EYHL2, probably in the 2021/22 season, will have a major impact on umpiring at national and provincial level. IHUA have already written to Hockey Ireland to express our views on the matter and also to advise on the likely outcome as all stakeholders need to be aware.
13. Correspondence from Hockey Ireland regarding proposals for changing the dates and format of 'Age Group' inter-provincials – see paragraph 31. later.
14. Munster Report: Numbers remain a problem. Munster Branch have been informed that it will be difficult to appoint to fixtures in Munster if a full EYHL2 is implemented next season. MHUA was due to hold a NUAC course in Thurles but unfortunately had to be postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions. As per the recommendations of IHUA, large quantities of data from the MHUA umpiring portal were backed-up including all coaching and assessment reports, all watcher feedback and other relevant information.
15. Leinster Report: This season LHUA managed to increase their numbers by 11 umpires. An Umpire Development Committee established which has been working closely with the LHA umpire development officer; two open training meetings held for clubs and potential new members in 2019/20 season; both courses had a combined attendance of in excess 80. A further NUA course was scheduled for March 2020 but unfortunately cancelled due to Covid-19. Education is probably the most significant update. LHUA are liaising closely with LHA and are now working on a strategic plan which will include a new education plan for webinars, training days (including a pre-season event), a young umpire course, a club umpire course and rolling out the National Umpire Award Course.
16. In relation to the Leinster report regarding education and development, WMcC advised the meeting that IHUA will discuss a paper which is currently being considered and which will have provincial involvement. It will also involve the national Umpire Development Officer. This will cover some of the points raised. TG advised that LHUA will be following all national umpiring objectives. **ACTION: WMcC to liaise with Bruce Bale.**



IHUA Constitution

17. Further work is to be done on the revised Constitution once more discussions have been held with Hockey Ireland. Implementation of the new Registration System has a significant impact so it is important for us to understand the implications for umpiring. A reasonably constructive meeting with Hockey Ireland has already been held with supplementary meetings to follow.

Hockey Ireland Meetings

18. RA & WMcC met Dwyne Hill, Ruth Montgomery & Sue Haslem on 29th May 2020 to discuss a number of important issues. WMcC summarised:

- a. HI have three quotes for insurance; all umpires on the new Registration System will have Personal Injury Insurance and some other cover but crucially the policy does not include Public Liability Indemnity nor income protection so each umpire should have their own policy if they feel it is necessary. The HI policy covers all registered participants not just umpires. PM queried the sense of this for umpires who have no qualifications or who are not members of any Provincial umpiring body or IHUA. It seems illogical to register unqualified, untrained and unknown umpires then offer them the same benefits as recognised, qualified umpires who are in the formal umpiring structures. WMcC and RA advised that it is being discussed with HI that no-one can register as an umpire unless they have completed the NUAC and are properly vetted, also that it remains IHUA's objective that all matches in Ireland are umpired by HI registered umpires. It was also advised that the cost/charge for registration is also being discussed for IHUA members compared to umpires who are not part of the formal umpiring structures;
- b. A very long discussion ensued on the potential impacts on umpiring nationally and provincially of the HI Registration System and the insurance position described above. The absence of Public Liability indemnity remains a serious concern;
- c. Noted there is currently no voice for umpiring on the Hockey Ireland Board so many umpiring issues at national and provincial level may not be properly understood. TG reminded everyone that IHUA once had an automatic seat on the Board to add expertise and knowledge of umpiring matters. It was acknowledged this changed once HI became a company. As the HI AGM has been postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions it was accepted changes at governance and management level are unlikely in the short term.
- d. WMcC and RA advised that discussions are still on-going but advised the Committee that the HI Board are the final decision-makers. However IHUA must discuss the issues with the HI staff for them to bring forward. WMcC advised that resolution of all the above matters is not straightforward. **ACTION: WMcC and RA to further liaise with HI in their on-going discussions.**



Finance

19. SMcA reported that six donations totalling €129 were received for addition to the Umpire Development Fund. SMcA will keep a separate record of this account. **ACTION: SMcA**
20. One expense claim for EYHL fees is still to be closed. Three umpires have yet to supply banking details for their shirts rebate. Await their responses; they will not be chased. One person in Ulster owes £150 which is currently being pursued for payment. **ACTION: SMcA**
21. WMcC thanked Simon for all his work on the payment of the expenses and clothing rebate as this is a considerable tasking.
22. Ulster Hockey have paid the invoice issued for the Hockey Development programme.
23. Current balance of €9600 remains in our two accounts. The final end of season balance may change a little depending on issues at paragraph 20. above being resolved. All other rebates and expenses have been paid in full.

Sponsorship & Clothing

24. WMcC thanked GC for compiling a detailed document to assist with clothing reimbursement.

Development

25. WMcC is liaising with Sue Haslem and Ruth Montgomery on a new Umpiring Strategy document for Hockey Ireland. HI needs to come up with an Umpire Strategy for their Strategic Plan. Umpiring objectives that everyone can buy into are important, particularly at provincial level. Ruth and Sue have sent a first draft. WMcC, PM & RA working on it on behalf of IHUA. All IHUA Executive Committee will then be asked to comment and add thoughts. Once Committee is content then response will be sent to Ruth & Sue. HI will most likely liaise directly with Provinces and Provincial Umpiring bodies for their input prior to it being sent for Hockey Ireland Board approval. **ACTION: All**
26. Last month Tex Solutions was reported as being on the brink of administration. After many unsuccessful efforts to make contact, they eventually replied and the situation was clarified. Tex Solutions reported they are operating business as usual. IHUA to write formally to Tex Solutions seeking a statement of their commitment to the product, their future outlook as a company and the stability of their business. The letter will include a request to Tex Solutions to confirm that their system is fully GDPR compliant for IHUA data or, if not, what the cost would be to make it so. **ACTION: RJ**
27. In the meantime WMcC, TG & RA viewed a good demonstration of the 'Who'sTheUmpire?' application as a contingency plan in case an alternative system is required at short notice. IHUA used 'Who'sTheUmpire?' until 2015. Back then it was essentially deployed only as a web-based appointments system but the product has been substantially enhanced and improved in the interim especially the financial/accounting side of it.

28. PM suggested we need two decisions now: 1. Do we stay with Tex Solutions? 2. Do we switch immediately to 'Who'sTheUmpire?' so it's ready for 2020/21 season? If we don't decide now then we are committed to the status quo for another year. SMcA agreed stating Tex Solutions perhaps presents unacceptable risks in respect of GDPR and the sustainability/viability of future product support. There was strong feeling during the meeting in favour of an immediate move to 'Who'sTheUmpire?' depending on value for money and GDPR issues being resolved.

29. Agreed to arrange a demo of 'Who'sTheUmpire?' week commencing 15th June 2020 to include IHUA, Dwyne Hill, Ruth Montgomery & Sue Haslam (Hockey Ireland), Linda Ingram (Technical Appointments) and with all Provincial umpiring bodies represented. **ACTION: TG**

30. WMcC & RJ updated the meeting on recent correspondence and orders for new radios. The IHUA proposal document was sent to Provinces as agreed. All Provinces responded by 5th June 2020 indicating numbers of radios required:

- Leinster - 50 (of which they require IHUA assistance for 38);
- Ulster – 61 ^ (of which they require IHUA assistance for 65 as some already purchased);
(^ - at their own request Ulster's figures were amended as stated above after the date of the IHUA meeting)
- Connaght - 6 (of which they require IHUA assistance for 3);
- Munster are unable to provide exact figures just yet as they await clarification from the Department of Sport who must authorise the go ahead to purchase equipment.

Grading and Selection

31. Hockey Ireland have asked if IHUA can support the rescheduled u16/u18 interpro tournaments from Thursday 29th to Saturday 31st October 2020 in Ulster (Girls) & Leinster (Boys) on the proviso hockey starts again as normal in September. PM reported that the Interpro WG are considering changing the format of the whole tournament in future including adjusting age groups to u15/u17 and running the tournaments over multiple weekends towards the end of season rather than one weekend near the start of season. The revisions present IHUA with a number of umpire appointment challenges:

- Thursday & Friday would present availability problems as they are part of the working week and not every umpire can easily take time off;
- IHUA should support Hockey Ireland's proposal to appoint young, developing umpires to these tournaments depending on availability;
- KC added that if the interpro dates clash with an EYHL weekend then we are simply unable to provide enough umpires to cover both sets of matches;
- WMcC also mentioned a proposal that interpro matches are staged without technical tables. While it is only a suggestion at this juncture all agreed IHUA will not support that proposal especially if we are appointing young, inexperienced umpires who will require more, not less, support for game management and who would benefit greatly from the experience of working with a technical table.



32. Umpire Coordinators' document – TG & KC to provide metrics of time spent each week in their roles so HI can understand the effort and commitment it takes by volunteers. WMcC, SMcA & PM to work on costings for proposal to HI for remuneration. **ACTION: WMcC, SMcA & PM**
33. WMcC reported on an EYHL Code of Conduct report and result of disciplinary hearing. A UCD player was suspended by Hockey Ireland's Disciplinary Panel for 3 matches; this was reduced to 1 match on appeal following receipt of a 9 page solicitor's letter. A spectator involved in the incident, who was the player's father, received no disciplinary sanction. IHUA to ask Jerome Pels (HI) for an explanation and lessons learnt about the disciplinary process so we can educate our umpires on how better to deal with such incidents in future. **ACTION: WMcC**
34. RJ reported that all grading, assessment and coaching data has been scraped from the Tex Solutions system and backed-up off-line on spreadsheets and Word documents. Some gaps include pre-2019 data (> 14 months old) not available via normal system reports. It was also reported that all IHUA appointment and finance data has been backed-up and Provinces were contacted to ensure they take appropriate back-ups of all their data.

Any Other Business

35. RJ asked, "Does IHUA need to develop a Covid-19 Recovery Plan setting out the prerequisites we would expect to see in place before umpires are appointed to matches again once hockey resumes?" HI have issued guidance for Covid-19 recovery but it does not acknowledge umpires. WMcC advised that he had sent guidance produced by NZ hockey to HI Competitions Committee however further discussion, to include umpire advice, is required. IHUA will request consultation on new match day guidance or local regulations to incorporate Covid-19 considerations and mitigations. **ACTION: RJ to contact HI Competitions Committee regarding consultation on the issue prior to any further guidance being issued.**

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **Sunday 19th July 2020** most likely via conference call.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1:05pm.

Minutes prepared by Robert Johnston

IHUA Hon Secretary

14th June 2020

Summary of Agreed Actions

Para Ref	Action	Who
2.	Finalise member protocol re tournaments etc.	Warren McCully
4.	Update travel and subsistence guidance document and reissue	Rob Argent
5.	Write to HI Competitions re bad weather policy and our concerns re weather warnings	Robert Johnston
6.	Paper on urinating to be updated	Warren McCully
7.	Information to be sent to Sedgwick	Geoff Conn
8.	Revisit misconduct issues prior to start of new season	All Committee Members
16.	Paper on umpire education and awareness	Warren McCully
18 d.	Further liaison with Hockey Ireland on membership, insurance and other matters	Warren McCully & Rob Argent
19.	Separately record Umpire Development Fund	Simon MacAllister
20.	Chase outstanding payment of £150	Simon MacAllister
25.	Input to new Umpiring Strategy	All Committee Members
26.	Write to Tex Solutions	Robert Johnston
29.	Arrange Who'sTheUmpire? demonstration w/c 15 th June 2020	Tom Goode

32. Costings for Umpire Appointments Coordinators' paper for Hockey Ireland	Warren McCully, Simon MacAllister & Peter Murphy
33. Write to HI seeking explanation and lessons learnt from Disciplinary process	Warren McCully
35. Contact HI Competitions Committee re consultation on Covid-19 related matters	Robert Johnston