



LONDON AREA DISCIPLINE REPORT - 2025/2026

1. We have been operating under the England Hockey Disciplinary Regulations for some time. My predecessor reminded the London Area in the previous report of the main changes for clubs and individuals from the previous disciplinary regime being:
 - a. The abolition of MMOs, replaced by a post-match red card for up to 30 minutes after the end of a match.
 - b. The abolition of disrepute offences, replaced by the concept of misconduct that is broadly defined in the regulations.
 - c. A formal starting point of 30 days for red cards issued for umpire abuse.
 - d. A broad definition of "violence" in the regulations.
2. Clubs are reminded again that the automatic mandatory minimum suspension for a red card offence is 16 days unless it is a minor offences red card. For offences involving violence (threatened, attempted or used) it is 30 days (or 60 days if against an umpire or match official). These are minimum sanctions.
3. This season there were 16 red cards issued to players of London clubs or universities that led to suspensions of 16 days or more. This number does not include cards issued in National League games. This is the same number as the previous season. No player received more than one red card this season.
4. There was a decrease in the number of red cards being issued for violent offences. Clubs and players should be aware that the formal definition of violence is broad and essentially covers any deliberate, reckless or negligent physical contact contrary to or outside the rules of hockey. It does not require any intention to harm or injure. We often receive representations seeking to challenge the classification of offences as involving "violence" that are admitted to satisfy this in broad definition.
5. There was a significant increase in the number of red cards showed for abusive or foul language to umpires. Our sport is dependent on our volunteer umpires. We will be working with England Hockey's new officiating manager in relation to campaigns about respect for our officials, especially when leagues reach their competitive conclusions.



6. We have also received 14 misconduct complaints this year. Four of those have been found proven, in each case leading to suspensions. One of the suspensions was given to a captain where the Panel concluded that the captain did not fulfil the responsibilities required under Regulation 3.4 during the match. An additional case was partially proved and a suspended sanction issued. Clubs and individuals are encouraged to report serious misconduct. However, they should also keep in mind that each misconduct complaint takes a very large amount of volunteer time to investigate and determine. Misconduct complaints should not be used for grievances that could have been resolved between clubs or players on the day, nor is it generally appropriate to report in-game incidents that were not dealt with (or are not considered to have been dealt with adequately) by umpires (unless there is clear (e.g. video) evidence that a serious (e.g. violent) offence was missed). There is a lot of guidance on England Hockey's website about misconduct and we reiterate that misconduct complaints are properly evidenced.
7. There have been no successful appeals against decisions of the London disciplinary panel this year. The London Area is grateful to the South East Area who heard two of the misconduct cases while an unsuccessful appeal was outstanding against a London Disciplinary Panel decision.
8. I would like to take this opportunity to repeat last year's request and to ask that all London clubs pass on a reminder to their club umpires in relation to red card report forms.
 - a. It is important that forms are submitted as soon as possible and in any event within 72 hours of the match and that they contain as much information as possible about the offence and surrounding circumstances. We have sometimes been hampered by red card report forms that are submitted late or do not contain enough information to help us decide how to categorise the offence or what sanction to impose without making further enquiries. This is obviously time-consuming and delays our decision-making.
 - b. The new online form makes submitting red cards really easy. It is also helpful to receive comments from the supporting umpire and they can do it separately. The red card form does need to be submitted by the issuing umpire.
9. This season I have been assisted by two Assistant Area Disciplinary Administrators - Marilyn Walker and Bjorn Schwarz. I wish to record my thanks for their hard work and I am grateful that they will be continuing in the role next year. We also co-opted Mark Bennett, London Area's



governance director on to the Panel for one case due to workloads else where and thank him for his support.

Richard Chere
London Area Disciplinary Administrator

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