



SOUTH CENTRAL HOCKEY NEWS

MARCH 2025

Welcome to the March 2025 Newsletter

This issue of the South Central Hockey March contains updates from:



- Finance
- Adult League
- Officiating Development
- Officiating update
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- Promoting your club

In order for us to help you we would like to remind you all to please keep all your contact details up-to-date on [GMS](#) and for those who are committee members through the [England Hockey Club portal](#). It is this method that allows us to communicate information to you.

Finance Update



Please make sure all club treasurers have paid their invoices!

Umpires thank-you for your trickle of expense submission please keep them coming.

South Central Hockey has a small amount of budget to help hockey clubs who are in hardship or need a small grant - perhaps to buy new kickers etc.

Please feel free to email finance@southcentral.hockey and also Chair@southcentral.hockey and we will review every request and take to the South Central Hockey board for a decision.



Adult League Update

The Area League Management Committee (ALMC) has been inundated with Exemption Selection Pass (SXP) requests this season, 164 so far, many of them not needed (clubs not understanding the purpose of an SXP). Information on the requirements are published on our [website](#).

We have sent out a couple of surveys this month, firstly looking for the views of the clubs on 10 team divisions and whether to play 17.5 minute quarters, both of which were supported, and the ALMC will be asking the Board for inclusion as a proposal at the South Central Hockey Ltd AGM in July.

Quarters can be played from 2025-26, but a change to 10-team divisions would have to await implementation in 2026-27.

Additionally, clubs have been asked whether to reorganise the sub-areas of Cherwell, Solent, Forest and Thames so that they become divisions of South and North. This is in response to the issue that only one team can be promoted from those divisions as they feed into North/South, and the response will be reported when the survey closes.

We have sent out a request to all clubs asking for volunteers to become a Divisional Secretary; we currently have 8 Divisional Secretaries covering 21 men and 19 women Divisions, with no response. We will send another request shortly along with a request for a volunteer to look after SXP's. Volunteers for these roles are vital for the running of the Adult Leagues, and spreading the workload would be massively helpful. The addition of an SXP Coordinator would assist the clarity of applications and outcomes of these requests.

The ALMC have submitted 63 alterations to the Area League Regulations to the Adult League Working Group (ALWG) for their consideration; there is a particular thank you to those clubs that responded with their thoughts. The ALWG meet in March to go through the alterations from each area.



Officiating Development Update

Newbury & Thatcham Hockey Club hosted an exceptional evening of hockey umpire coaching, bringing together 12 enthusiastic umpires and the renowned South Central Hockey Umpire Coaching Hit Squad. The event was a resounding success, marked by high energy, collaborative learning, and a shared passion for the sport.

Coaching Highlights:

1. **Interactive Sessions:** The evening kicked off with interactive sessions led by the Umpire Coaching Hit Squad. These sessions were designed to engage participants through practical demonstrations, real-time feedback, and hands-on practice. The umpires were able to refine their skills in a supportive and dynamic environment.
2. **Skill Development:** The training focused on key areas such as positioning, signalling, and decision-making. The Hit Squad provided valuable insights and tips, helping the umpires to enhance their confidence and competence on the field. The use of scenario-based exercises added depth to the learning experience.
3. **Team Building:** Beyond technical coaching, the event fostered a strong sense of camaraderie among the participants. The umpires had the opportunity to network, share experiences, and build lasting connections.

This sense of community is vital for the continued growth and success of umpiring at the club.

4. **Positive Feedback:** Participants expressed their appreciation for the well-organized and informative umpire coaching session. Many highlighted the expertise and approachability of the Hit Squad umpire coaches, who made the learning process enjoyable and impactful. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with calls for more such events in the future.

Conclusion: The evening of hockey umpire coaching at Newbury & Thatcham Hockey Club was a tremendous success. The combination of expert guidance from the Umpire Coaching Hit Squad, interactive learning, and a supportive atmosphere made it a memorable and valuable experience for all involved. The club looks forward to hosting more such events to continue developing the skills and confidence of its umpires. Thank you, Umpire Coaching Hit Squad and NTHC Umpires. Should you wish to have the Umpire Coaching Hit Squad visit your club to help develop your umpires then please email the South Central Coaching Team

leadclubliaison.officiating@southcentral.hockey

steve.goddards59@gmail.com

Junior Section Update

We have decided to forego playoffs for U14 leagues this season in T2 and T3 because too many matches are still outstanding and therefore there are no clear qualifiers for a finals day.

A plea from the South Central Junior organisers please use the summer break to plan for the season ahead in terms of numbers of players you will have in each age group and try to think about any impacts locally that might change your numbers. This year we have had the problem of a few clubs entering the incorrect tier and the knock on effects of that throughout the season. We will be having a junior clubs meeting (online) again in May, date yet to be confirmed. Entries for leagues will be required by the end of June. Please bear these in mind when having your summer break.

The State School tournament will be happening again on 18th March at Reading Hockey Club.



Officiating Resources

A couple of exciting new resources for Officiating Development, building on the work being done by the full team, including the South Central Club Umpiring 'Hit Squad' and the Monday Mixer sessions, alongside the regular development work at matches.

Video portal: we are building up a library of videos from various games where developers are present, designed to demonstrate common scenarios and areas where we know there can be either confusion or inconsistency in umpire appli-



cation. These videos (once appropriate permissions have been gained) will be available through the UmpireDev.co.uk website for registered site users. We will have a mix of videos with explanations and tags for what to look out for, with examples of both good and not so good choices being made. The video resource will be designed to help umpires improve their own game and provide context for some situations that might not be seen that often too.

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Currently on umpiredev.co.uk, registered users can also look back through all Mixer sessions from this season and have a look at those where we have given presentations on specific topics, so everyone has a chance to gain the benefit of the discussions, even if they can't make Monday evenings!

Umpire Journey Online Course: we are at the early stages of compiling an online course for new and aspiring umpires to guide them through picking up the whistle, first skills to concentrate on and umpiring their first match, all the way through to progression to Level 2. At the moment, this course is with the Officiating Committee for thoughts, before it is filmed and produced. This will also be available through Umpire-Dev.co.uk and all umpires registered with EHO and connected to South Central Officiating will be made aware when it is ready for viewing. There will be no charge for this course as we want to encourage as many people as possible to take a look and pick up a whistle!



Save the Date

The provisional date for the South Central Hockey Ltd AGM have been set for Thursday 17th July 2025 at 19.00.

Please mark this date in your calendars so you can have your points of view heard and recorded.



We are always listening and want to help develop hockey in the area along the lines that the majority of clubs want.

We particularly want to hear from grass roots hockey, junior and youth hockey, umpire development youngsters as well as those more experienced.

Contact us:

operations@southcentral.hockey

Your Hockey Club

South Central Hockey is wishing to help your club promote its stories and match day activities.

You may have seen on our social channels that an arrangement has been made with Basingstoke Hockey to publish their stories.

This facility is available to all and we urge you to take advantage of this.

To do this please write your story and add up to 10 pictures. Tell us what happened, who was involved, where and when it happened.

Please try and keep your submission factual and include plenty of detail.

- Submit up to 10 high-resolution photographs.
- Description of your news item or event
- Please be as specific as possible about your news. Tell us about the effect it's had on your club's or league's members and the wider hockey community.
- If relevant please supply a quote from a representative of your club or league, eg coach, player, administrator - to add personality to your news story. Don't forget to add a name to the quote and that person's job title.
- Add your club's website or main social media channel so that readers can find out more information.

When complete please send to operations@southcentral.hockey.

