

# South Central Area Officiating Committee

## April 2026 – Officiating newsletter

As we come to the end of the season (with a few junior sessions still to go) it is time to say a huge thank you to everyone who has helped us get through this season is as good a state as we did. Time now either for some well-earned time away from hockey, or to dive into Summer hockey!

### Committee

Just as a reminder, your committee is:

Role	Name	E-mail contact
Chair	Simon Milford	<a href="mailto:Chair.officiating@southcentral.hockey">Chair.officiating@southcentral.hockey</a>
Vice Chair	Hatty Wood	<a href="mailto:ViceChair.officiating@southcentral.hockey">ViceChair.officiating@southcentral.hockey</a>
TAP Lead	David Rigby	<a href="mailto:LeadTAP.officiating@southcentral.hockey">LeadTAP.officiating@southcentral.hockey</a>
Lead Appointer	Allan Notman	<a href="mailto:LeadAppointer.officiating@southcentral.hockey">LeadAppointer.officiating@southcentral.hockey</a>
Lead Developer	Ginette Tessier	<a href="mailto:Leaddeveloper.officiating@southcentral.hockey">Leaddeveloper.officiating@southcentral.hockey</a>
Club Liaison	Rowena Shepherd	<a href="mailto:Leadclubliaison.officiating@southcentral.hockey">Leadclubliaison.officiating@southcentral.hockey</a>
Young Umpires	Sophie Parker	<a href="mailto:LeadYoung.officiating@southcentral.hockey">LeadYoung.officiating@southcentral.hockey</a>

Your committee is here for you as an official (either umpire, match official, coach or assessor) at whatever level of the South Central organisation you operate at. If you have an officiating related question, need some help with umpire coaching or development, or just have officiating questions that you can't find the answer to – then get in touch with us and we'll see if we can help.

### How to Unsubscribe

If you do not want to receive any further e-mails from the South Central AOC then please send an e-mail to [chair.officiating@southcentral.hockey](mailto:chair.officiating@southcentral.hockey) with the subject line Unsubscribe. Then we'll remove your address from the distribution of future AOC e-mails. We'll be sad to see you go but it is important that you have a choice.

### Expenses

Can all officials please claim any outstanding expenses, via GMS, by 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2026, at the latest please, to allow them to be accounted for in the current financial season.

Any expenses claimed after that may be delayed and won't be accounted for until next season.

## South Central Branch of England Hockey Officiating – Annual General Meeting

That rather cumbersome title means that it is our AGM coming up, on 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2026. You should already have received the formal notification but, just in case, here are the main details once again:

Please register your intention to attend here:

[South Central Branch - England Hockey Officiating - Registration for 2026 AGM – Fill out form](#)

If you wish to nominate someone to stand on the committee please complete the form here:

[England Hockey Officiating - South Central Branch - Committee nominations for the AGM 2026 – Fill out form](#)

If there are multiple nominations for posts then voting will be held on-line, details of which will be sent out in due course.

Minutes of last year's AGM, and other 2026 AGM material when available, will be found here shortly:

<https://umpiredev.co.uk/agm/>

## Video recording of matches

We have had some queries about guidance for recording matches. There may be formal guidance being issued before next season but, in the meantime, our advice is that:

- Both teams need to agree that the match will be recorded (this should be agreed at the earliest opportunity – usually the confirmation e-mail from the home team of the details of the game)
- It must be made clear the purpose of the recording, and who will have access to it
- Copies of, or links to, any recording should be made available to both teams and the officials, if requested.

Where recordings are stored on systems, such as Veo or YouTube, there should be suitable access controls in place (meaning that YouTube videos should be Unlisted or Private, rather than Public).

Any questions about this – please get in touch.

## Discipline

There have been some occasions this season where red cards have been awarded for offences which, on reflection, should have been yellow cards (of either 5 or 10 minutes duration).

It is, of course, difficult to provide comprehensive guidance, that covers every situation that an umpire will face but, in general, red cards should be for non-hockey type events – such as violence, or the use of language relating to protected characteristics (such as racist or homophobic for example).

Hockey related incidents, such as clumsy tackles, are more likely to attract a yellow card rather than a red card.

Of course, a player who has received a yellow card, and then a second yellow card for the same type of offence (and by type of offence we mean break down of play, dissent, or overly physical play), should be shown the yellow card followed immediately by the red card. The player will then be suspended for the remainder of the match, and a red card form should be completed, but there will not be an automatic 16 day suspension.

## Crowd Control

We have also had occasions this season where the issue of crowd control has arisen and it might be timely to provide some guidance. There may again be more formal guidance from England Hockey in due course.

Generally, umpires are responsible for, and have control over, people within the fence surrounding the pitch AND who are listed on the GMS sheet for the day. So players, coaches and managers are all under control of the umpires.

But spectators, who may be outside the fence or, in some cases, inside the fence are beyond the control of the umpires. If you have concerns about, for example, the safety of younger people on the sidelines, then please make your concerns known to the relevant captain before the game.

But the umpire does not have the authority to issue a card to a spectator, nor to refuse to play the match until the spectators are removed. If the heckling from the spectators gets too intense, or offensive, then by all means ask the relevant captain to manage the issue. If the issue continues then the most likely course of action is to raise a misconduct complaint after the match.

As always, if you have any questions then please get in touch.

## Safeguarding

There is guidance on the England Hockey website about safeguarding:

<https://www.englishockey.co.uk/governance/safeguarding/safeguarding-training-education>

There is a specific module that all new umpires, going through the Level 1 process, have to complete:

<https://www.englishockey.co.uk/governance/safeguarding/safeguarding-training-education/safeguarding-awareness-module>

Many of you will also have completed that module, for which our thanks. If you haven't yet been through the module the summer break would be a great time to complete it.

One simple piece of advice for umpires is that we shouldn't touch any player, or other person on the pitch, apart, obviously, from the hand shakes or fist bumps at the end of the game. There have been occasions where umpires have put a hand on a player, just to reassure them, but it has been seen by other observers as something with the potential to be a safeguarding issue.

There will, of course, be exceptions but "no touching" is generally a good rule to follow.

**Thanks!**

Thanks again for everything that you have all done to help our sport throughout the season.

I look forward to seeing you at our AGM and then to see you all again when the new season starts at the end of the summer.

Simon Milford

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