

WEST AREA APPOINTMENTS LEAD REPORT TO AGM 2024/25

Thank you to all umpires who have helped this season – without your support and flexibility we would not be able to cover as many games as we did. For a number of reasons, we have had a number of cancelled weekends. Wind, rain snow etc etc. We have completed all appointments for all the leagues bar a couple which is a fantastic achievement and down to all of our members. Geography of teams has also been challenging where no other region covers a larger area than ours! Swansea – Swindon – Penzance!

It is sad to report that we haven't had the same type of support from the clubs who arranged many of the re-arranged games at very short notice and at difficult days of the week with late pushbacks without any thoughts about umpires when making arrangements.

We have also had several clubs who have not offered teas or drinks after the games or left umpires in corners on their own. This is disappointing and if we lose a number of umpires from the panels as we project then these will be the clubs who are likely not to have any future appointments.

We have had a number of schools approach us for umpires – with many games being on a Wednesday where majority of umpires are already taking Bucs appointments. We have also had a number of complaints about the conduct of the coaches/teachers who should be reminded that we are volunteers and do not get paid as they do. We would like to remind them that they are in charge of themselves as well as their teams and must set a better example to their players.

What all this leads to is that clubs need to start showing more respect for the “third team” before, during and after games. Without umpires there are no games! We are playing hockey not football and this mentality should not and will not be tolerated that is why I would like to see a zero tolerance to dissent and support from West Discipline panel.

We have had a number of new umpires joining the panels this year (and congratulations to them all) which has just outweighed the numbers who have retired or left the area. I do not see any queues to join the panels next year so making the same amount of appointments as we did this year is going to be very challenging.

I would like to offer my thanks to Mike Daniel and Anthony Bridge (their reports are at the end of this report) who have again this year completed the BUCS appointments on Wednesdays and to Pete Hammond and Steve Hamey who help Anthony and Matt Reynolds in other weekend appointments. Whilst writing this report I have learned of the passing of Pete who I will miss as a friend and as a colleague RIP Pete you will be missed.

My thanks also go to the hard work that the selection committee do that always go unnoticed but without them we wouldn't have a working appointments system. Charles Hallows has made a real difference this year and should be congratulated and thanked for all of his efforts this year in promoting umpiring in the region.

My final thanks go to David Lillywhite who has spent a considerable time working with me to get the majority of games covered – which I hope all appreciate.

Graham Woolcock – West Appointments Lead

South of region BUCS Hockey season 2024/25 report :-

I am pleased to report I was able to appoint Umpires to all BUCS Hockey season fixtures, both for men & women teams of Exeter University(2nds & below), Plymouth University & Plymouth Marjon University.

This was achieved with the support & availability of many umpires on Wednesday's throughout the BUCS season.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my gratitude for assistance Pete Hammond & umpire's flexibility on occasions, throughout this BUCS season.

I Look forward to umpires who were available for your continued support for the next BUCS season & if any umpire is also interested in officiating in Plymouth or Exeter BUCS fixtures on Wednesday's afternoons then please let me know.

Mike Daniel,

North of region BUCS Hockey season 2024/25 report :-

I was able to appoint umpires to all BUCS fixtures that the universities wanted umpires appointing for both men and women teams for University of Bath, University of Bristol and UWE.

I would like to thank all the umpires who took appointments and made themselves available, some doubling up, being flexible to move their appointment or stepping in at short notice to ensure the matches were covered.

There is plenty of opportunity to umpire BUCS games in Bristol or Bath, with friendlies starting in September, so keep your availability updated on GMS during next season and the games are anytime from 1pm to 5pm so if you can only do a late or early game, add this to the notes.

Anthony Bridge

Report from Matt Reynolds – South Appointments

Many thanks to those who have taken appointments in this sector this season and the general improvement in contact being made by clubs to confirm arrangements.

This has been an extremely challenging season with our small number of volunteer umpires making themselves available around their other personal commitments. This pool is, however, small. Perhaps when the club survey is looked at, clubs wishing for more neutral

appointments across the levels, the pool is far too small. The only way that more games can be supported is far greater numbers taking appointments via the system. With the ability to add notes games can be scheduled around family, work and hockey related needs. Without new pool umpires who can then be coached, developed within the area, increased support as clubs indicate, by survey, they desire is simply not possible.

I would, once more, ask clubs to look carefully at their starting times within the 'slots' they have. If volunteers are unable to leave their home areas before the nearing middle of the day then pushback times which would not allow travel and a timely arrival make any support from pools umpires impossible. One league we would seek to support had at least 8 weekends with not one game starting at a time which could have been supported by volunteers, equality of appointing will require an equality of opportunity to support along with more being available. One email starts the process.