

North West Hockey Officiating

FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL NORTH WEST PREMIER DIVISION AREA APPOINTED UMPIRES

Area Premier Divisions may play Quarters rather than Halves

As set out in the Adult League Regulations 2025-26 it is optional that Premier Division games **may be four quarters of 17 minutes 30 seconds, with no stoppage for short corners. To be implemented if requested by the Home team.** In the North West this will be a trial and the ALMC will monitor this throughout the season. However there will be some constraints in addition to the regulations:

- If a home team elects to play quarters, then they should notify the opposition and official within the timescales required, as set out in the Adult League Regulations.
- If a home team elects to play in quarters, then we anticipate that all home games for that club are played in quarters throughout the season.
- **The breaks will be specified at 2 mins at the end of quarters 1 & 3 and 5 mins at the end of quarter 2.**

No stoppage for short corners.

- The match official and umpires are responsible for timing these breaks and should be ready to commence play immediately the break has elapsed and if necessary that includes starting the game even if teams and players (including GKs) are not ready. This brings the game in line with higher level competitions.

Umpires are to start Penalty Corners on their whistle not their voice For greater consistency across the sport, and to deliver a clearer message to all involved in the game, the new guidance for umpires at all levels in England is to start Penalty Corners on a whistle not voice (e.g. no longer shouting “play” or “when you’re ready” for the injection to take place).

As per tournament regulations for the National and 8 Area Adult Leagues, time will not be stopped for the setup of the Penalty Corner, unless there is an injury, card or other situation that requires time to be stopped. This will also apply to most other competitions, but there may be some variations in specific tournament regulations (e.g. Talent Academy Cup). It is therefore important for umpires to check the tournament regulations for any amendments to the FIH Rules of Hockey.

From the 2025/2026 season:

- Umpires will blow their whistle to award the Penalty Corner.
- Allow the players enough time to put on their extra protective equipment and set up for the corner.
- Umpires will then blow their whistle to indicate for the Penalty Corner to start.
- The injector should play the ball within a couple of seconds of the whistle being blown and not delay too long.

It is felt this will have several benefits:

- Most umpires, particularly those that are new to the game, are more confident blowing their whistle than using their voice, therefore it will be clearer to the players when to start.
- It removes any ambiguity when umpires use the common phrase “when you’re ready” and it keeps the process the same if time is stopped for injury or other situation at a Penalty Corner.
- It also allows all umpires to use a great number of online resources (e.g. video clips)

to help their development, as they will now be following the main processes as seen on TV.

It should be noted that for many this is a change and therefore education will be key to both experienced umpires and players.

See Link HERE to EHO Guidance 2025-26 for further information.

Match Confirmation with Appointed Umpires

- **Adult League Reg: 11.1.2** If a fixture has Area Appointed umpires, the Club must confirm venue, start time and any other match- related information, at least 3 days before the Fixture.
- If the Home Team has failed to contact you, contact the home team yourself to find out why and confirm match details, and also if the home team fails provide refreshments then report to the League using the below email: infringementnwhl@gmail.com
- **However**, All Umpires taking Appointments **MUST** ensure their Contact details (Phone No/Email) are visible on GMS.

England Hockey strongly recommends facemasks be worn when defending Penalty

Corners:

- Officials may have seen that FIH have published guidance stating facemasks are mandatory when defending Penalty Corners in FIH events. **England Hockey have decided not to introduce mandatory Penalty Corner face masks for the 2025/2026 season – although it is strongly recommended that defending players do wear them.**

Note: This is for information ONLY, it is not for Umpires to enforce/become involved.