



LONDON AREA DISCIPLINE REPORT - 2023/2024

1. This season there were 19 red cards / MMOs issued to players of London clubs that resulted in suspensions of 16 days or more. This represents a significant increase in the number of red cards / MMOs as compared with last season (13). Two players received more than one red card / MMO.
2. It is not yet clear whether this is part of a wider problem of deteriorating discipline across the area. However, to put the figures in context, the nationwide total of red cards / MMOs leading to suspensions is 200 (as compared with 234 last year). London is therefore making up a greater proportion of red cards / MMOs this season (c.10% rather than c.6%).
3. We have also observed that a greater number of red cards / MMOs are being issued for violent offences. Clubs and players should be aware that the EH working definition of violence is broad and essentially covers any physical contact contrary to or outside the rules of hockey that is capable of causing injury. It does not require any intention to harm or injure.
4. There have also been three instances this season of disrepute offences against a player leading to a lengthy playing suspensions. One disrepute complaint has also been upheld against a London club relating to their players' conduct during matches, in particular towards umpires.
5. Clubs are reminded again that the automatic mandatory minimum suspension for a red card or MMO offence is 16 days. For offences involving violence (threatened, attempted or used) it is 30 days (or 60 days if against an umpire or match official). These are mandatory minimum sanctions that we have no discretion to reduce. In addition, the nationally agreed starting point for abuse towards umpires is 30 days, unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to the specific case.
6. There have been no appeals to the London Area Disciplinary Appeal Panel. The current Chair of the Appeal Panel is Mark Bennett, who is also the Governance Director for the London Area. We would ideally like to recruit a new Chair who plays no role on the London Management Committee. There are also vacancies for Appeal Panel members. Anyone who is interested in taking on either role should again contact me.
7. I would like to take this opportunity to repeat a request that I made last year and to ask that all London clubs to pass on a reminder to their club umpires in relation to red card/MMO report forms. It is important that forms are submitted to me 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/MMO 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. It is also helpful to receive comments from the supporting umpire - and there is a box form this on the standard template red card/MMO report form - and video footage if it is available.

8. This season I have been assisted again two Assistant Area Disciplinary Administrators - Alistair Clift and Marilyn Walker - who have helped manage the workload of the discipline team. I am very grateful for their assistance with running London Area discipline. We still have vacancies for additional Assistant Area Disciplinary Administrators. Anyone who is interested should contact me directly at discipline@london.hockey.

Rupert Allen
London Area Disciplinary Administrator