RULES OF INDOOR HOCKEY

EFFECTIVE FROM 1 NOVEMBER 2026

Rules of Indoor Hockey

including explanations

Effective from 1 November 2026

Copyright © FIH 2026

The International Hockey Federation
Rue du Valentin 61
CH – 1004 Lausanne
Switzerland

Tel.: + 41 21 641 0606
Email: info@fih.hockey
Internet: www.fih.hockey

Responsibility and Liability

Participants in Indoor Hockey must be aware of the Rules of Indoor Hockey and of other information in this publication. They are expected to perform according to the Rules.

Emphasis is placed on safety. Everyone involved in the game must act with consideration for the safety of others. Relevant national legislation must be observed. Players must ensure that their equipment does not constitute a danger to themselves or to others by virtue of its quality, materials, or design.

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) does not accept responsibility for any defects or non-compliance of facilities and is not liable for any consequences resulting from their use. Any verification of facilities or equipment conducted before a match is limited to ensuring an overall appearance of compliance and sporting requirements.

Umpires play an important role in controlling the game and ensuring fair play.

Implementation and Authority

The Rules of Indoor Hockey apply to all Indoor Hockey players and officials. The date of implementation for international competition is 1 November 2026. National Associations have discretion to decide the date of implementation at national level.

The Rules of Indoor Hockey are issued by the FIH Rules Committee under the authority of the International Hockey Federation. Copyright is held by the International Hockey Federation.

Availability of the Rules

A copy of the Indoor Rules is available on the FIH website www.fih.hockey and is also available free in the 'Hockey Scores Live' app, available for iOS and Android.

CONTENTS

Introduction....4
Terminology....11

PLAYING THE GAME

1 Field of play....14
2 Composition of teams....15
3 Captains....18
4 Players' clothing and equipment....18
5 Match and result....22
6 Start and re-start play....23
7 Ball outside the field....24
8 Method of scoring....25
9 Conduct of play: players....26
10 Conduct of play: goalkeepers....30
11 Conduct of play: umpires....31
12 Penalties....33
13 Procedures for taking penalties....34
14 Personal penalties....45

UMPIRING

1 Objectives....48
2 Applying the Rules....49
3 Umpiring qualities & skills....51
4 Umpiring signals....55

FIELD AND EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

1 Field and field equipment....58
2 Stick....65
3 Ball....70
4 Goalkeeper's equipment....71

Additional Information Available....72

INTRODUCTION

RULES CYCLE AND RULES DEVELOPMENT

FIH believes that indoor hockey is enjoyable to play, to officiate in and to watch. Nevertheless, FIH will continue to seek ways of making our sport even more enjoyable for all its participants while retaining its unique and attractive characteristics. This enables our sport to develop, which is necessary in a world that makes large demands on personal time and in which recreation and sport can contribute to personal wellbeing.

The FIH Rules Committee continuously reviews the Rules of Indoor Hockey and welcomes suggestions for rule developments or clarifications, especially from National Associations. These Associations remain an important primary source of advice and guidance, but, where appropriate, proposals or queries may also be sent directly to info@fih.hockey or to the FIH postal address.

In its review work, the FIH Rules Committee takes into account information and observations from a wide range of sources, including players, coaches, officials, media, spectators, match and competition reports, video analysis and Tournament Regulations which may differ from the Rules. Trials approved by the FIH Rules Committee in local or limited contexts are particularly valuable, as they allow potential changes to be based on practical experience.

Updates to the Indoor Rules may be introduced during a Rules cycle. Unless specified otherwise, the updates in this Rules Book apply with effect from 1 November 2026 at international level. National Associations have discretion to decide the date of implementation at national level. FIH will avoid any major rule changes before the 2029 Indoor World Cup.

In all future developments, the FIH Rules Committee will keep a particular focus on dangerous elements of the game and on player safety, ensuring that developments in the Rules support both the attractiveness and safety of hockey. The FIH Rules Committee will also consider the fairness of rules – no undue advantage or disadvantage to any playing party and continually try to simplify the

current and new rules of the game.

PLAYING RULES IN INTERNATIONAL MATCHES

It is the intention of the Rules and Competitions Committees to try to reduce as far as possible the number of variations to the Rules which occur through Tournament Regulations. These differences have led in the past to some confusion on the part of players, officials, spectators and television audiences.

The Indoor Rules of Hockey and FIH Tournament Regulations apply to all International Hockey. The FIH Executive Board has agreed that the same Rules and FIH Tournament Regulations which vary the Rules of Indoor Hockey also apply to the top domestic League level of National Association Hockey. This is mandatory at top domestic League level, unless a National Association wishes to opt out of particular Rules or Regulations which vary the Rules of Indoor Hockey by applying to FIH to do so.

A limited number of variations in the playing conditions through Regulation will continue to exist in top level international matches played at FIH Tournaments. These include the countdown clock for penalty corners, which requires additional technical table equipment and resources. All other matches must be played in accordance with the Indoor Rules of Hockey unless otherwise agreed by FIH. National Associations may apply to FIH to opt out of particular Rules at levels below their top domestic Leagues and/or for particular age groups, should they so wish. The procedure for National Associations, and Continental Federations, to apply to FIH to opt out of particular Rules or Regulations which vary the Rules of Indoor Hockey continues to be available in the respective Workrooms on the FIH website.

RULES CHANGES

With the amendments introduced in this edition, no core elements of the game are being changed. The focus of the current Rules cycle is on clarifications, consistency of application and limited adjustments reflecting established practice and practical experience. This also applies to the amendments concerning personal penalties, which simplify the existing system and are intended to support clearer and

more consistent disciplinary management. In particular, the revised system avoids a player or team official receiving the same card more than once during a match, subject to the specific exception for cards awarded for a team offence. It is also an objective of the FIH Rules Committee, wherever possible, to align the wording and structure of the Rules of Outdoor and Indoor Hockey. This edition further advances that objective.

The following indoor-specific amendments are of particular note:

- The limitation on the number of substitutions between a fully equipped goalkeeper and an additional field player ("goalkeeper substitution off the field") previously contained in Rule 2.3 (b) has been removed. This restriction had originally been introduced when the number of players in indoor hockey was reduced from six to five per team. At that time, teams frequently substituted the goalkeeper with a field player in attacking situations in order to create a numerical advantage, often doing so repeatedly during the same phase of play. The limitation was intended to curb this tactical practice, to stabilise the flow of the game and also to reduce the risks associated with frequent substitutions during live play. Since the number of players has meanwhile been increased again to six per team, the FIH Rules Committee considers that such a restriction is no longer necessary. In the interest of simplifying the Rules, the Committee has therefore decided to remove this limitation and the various detailed provisions and exceptions associated with it, while continuing to monitor developments and reserving the right to reintroduce a similar restriction if required in the future.

- According to the amended Rule 5.1, the half-time interval is now set at 5 minutes. This change reflects the fact that all international competitions and the vast majority of other matches already apply a 5-minute half-time interval as standard practice. However, as further stated in Rule 5.1, different periods and intervals may still be specified by Regulation for particular competitions.

- Rule 9.10 has been clarified to expressly permit a player to bring a ball in the air under control by pressing it down with the flat side of the stick. In addition, it has been clarified that a goal

can only be scored if the ball is on the ground at the last contact by an attacker before entering the goal.

- In Rule 10.2, it has been clarified that goalkeepers may only propel the ball with their feet, kickers, legs or leg guards when the ball is on the ground. When the ball is in the air, these parts of the body may be used only to stop or deflect the ball. This reflects the existing interpretation of the Rule.

Most of the remaining amendments introduced in this edition of the Rules of Indoor Hockey follow changes that have been adopted in the current edition of the Rules of Hockey (Outdoor). In some cases, amendments that were introduced earlier in the Outdoor Rules have now also been incorporated into the Indoor Rules. These changes are intended to promote greater consistency between the two Rules Books where appropriate.

The amendments include:

- expansion and revision of the Terminology section, including the introduction of additional defined terms designed to improve clarity and readability;

- introduction of a prohibition on devices used to send or receive communication during play (Rule 4.6);

- clarification of the application of dangerous play provisions and the location of the resulting penalty (Rule 9.8);

- amendment of Rule 11.8 so that play is no longer always allowed to continue when the ball touches an umpire or another unauthorised person on the field; in situations where a team is disadvantaged, play is now re-started with a bully (Rule 11.8);

- clarification of the procedures for free pushes, in particular regarding the entry of the ball into the circle (Rule 13.2);

- clarification of penalty corner procedures, including the requirement for the injector to play the ball immediately after the start of a penalty corner and the consequences where this requirement is not met (Rules 13.3 and 13.6);

- clarification of the provisions relating to penalty corner protective equipment, including the applicable penalties for breaches (Rule 13.3 (m));

- revised treatment of bully situations arising during a penalty corner, which now generally result in completion of the penalty corner rather than a re-take (Rules 6.5 and 13.5 (h));

- revision of the system of personal penalties, under which the same player or team official should not receive two green or two yellow cards during the same match and a higher-category personal penalty must be imposed for any subsequent offence for which a card would otherwise be awarded (Rule 14);

- introduction of the possibility to impose personal penalties on team officials, including suspensions requiring the team to play with one fewer player (Rule 14);

- increase in the maximum permitted length of the left-hand protector from 355 mm to 365 mm to align with PPE testing standards.

Several of these amendments mirror changes introduced in the current edition of the Rules of Hockey (Outdoor), while others follow amendments that had already been adopted in earlier editions of the Outdoor Rules. Readers seeking a more detailed explanation of the background and rationale for these amendments are referred to the corresponding introductions to the recent editions of the Rules of Hockey (Outdoor).

To draw attention to all changes, a line appears in the margin of any text which has been changed.

APPLYING THE RULES

The FIH Rules Committee continues to be concerned that some Rules are not applied consistently.

Rule 7.4.c: ball intentionally played over the back-line by a defender and no goal is scored. If it is clear that the action is intentional,

umpires should not hesitate to award a penalty corner.

Rule 9.13: obstruction. Umpires should penalise shielding the ball with the stick more strictly. However, only clear cases of using the stick to shield the ball from an opponent should be penalised. Care should be taken to distinguish such situations from legitimate ball carrying or dribbling where the player remains in contact with and controls the ball with their stick. Umpires should also look out for a tackling player who, by pushing or leaning on an opponent, causes them to lose possession of the ball. They should also intervene early when players use the corners of the field or the side-boards to shield the ball from a legitimate tackle, particularly towards the end of matches. Early intervention will discourage this tactic and help maintain the flow of the game.

Rule 13.2 (a): ball stationary at a free push. Umpires are sometimes not strict enough in requiring the ball to be stationary, even if only briefly, before a free push is taken, particularly when it is taken as a self-pass. There must be a clear, visible attempt to stop the ball.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE FIH RULES COMMITTEE 2026:

Chair:	Christian Deckenbrock
EB Liaison:	Marcos Hofmann
Athletes Representative:	PR Sreejesh
Members:	
Barry Dancer	Simon Mason
Michelle Meister	Ahmed Youssef
Tahir Zaman	Rene Zelkin
Secretary:	Elisabeth Fuerst

TERMINOLOGY

Attack (Attacker)
The team (player) which (who) is trying to score a goal.

Back-line
The shorter (22 metres) perimeter line.

Circle
The area enclosed by and including the two quarter circles and the lines joining them at each end of the field opposite the centre of the back-lines.

Defence (Defender)
The team (player) which (who) is trying to prevent a goal being scored.

Deflect
Redirecting the ball's path using the stick or, in the case of a goalkeeper, their protective equipment or body, without stopping or taking possession of it.

Field Player
One of the participants on the field other than the goalkeeper.

Flick
Pushing the ball so that it is raised off the ground.

Goalkeeper
One of the participants of each team on the field who wears full protective equipment comprising at least headgear, leg guards and kickers and who is also permitted to wear goalkeeping hand protectors and other protective equipment.

Goal-line
The back-line between the goalposts.

Hit (which is not permitted in indoor hockey)
Striking the ball using a swinging movement of the stick towards the ball. This includes “slap” hitting the ball, which involves a long pushing or sweeping movement with the stick before making contact with the ball.

Injector
The attacker taking the push from the back-line at a penalty corner.

Offence
An action contrary to the Rules which may be penalised by an umpire.

Penalty corner protective equipment
Protective equipment worn by field players when defending a penalty corner, including face masks, knee pads and any additional hand protection worn for this purpose.

Player
One of the participants in a team.

Playing distance
The distance within which a player is capable of reaching the ball to play it.

Playing the ball: field player
Stopping, deflecting or moving the ball with the stick.

Push
Moving the ball along the ground using a pushing movement of the stick after the stick has been placed close to the ball. When a push is made, both the ball and the head of the stick are in contact with the ground.

Scoop
Raising the ball off the ground by placing the head of the stick under the ball and using a lifting movement.

Shot at goal
The action of an attacker attempting to score by playing the ball towards the goal from within the circle.

The ball may miss the goal, but the action is still a "shot at goal" if the player's intention is to score with a shot directed towards the goal.

Side-boards
The boards comprising the longer (44 metres) perimeter of the field.

Tackle
An action to stop an opponent retaining possession of the ball.

Team
A team consists of a maximum of twelve persons composed of a maximum of six players on the field and up to six substitutes.

Team official
A person appointed by a team who is not a player and who is authorised to sit on the team bench, such as a head coach, team manager, physiotherapist and medical doctor.

The role, number and accreditation of team officials may be further specified by Regulation.

1 Field of play

The information below provides a simplified description of the field of play. Detailed specifications of the field and equipment are provided in a separate section at the end of these Rules.

1.1 The recommended size of the field of play is rectangular 44 metres long and 22 metres wide.

Use of a full-size field of play is strongly recommended but a smaller size field of play may be specified in regulations. The minimum size of a field of play is 36 metres long and 18 metres wide.

1.2 Side-boards mark the longer perimeters of the field; back-lines mark the shorter perimeters of the field.

1.3 The goal-lines are the parts of the back-lines between the goal-posts.

1.4 A centre-line is marked across the middle of the field.

1.5 Areas referred to as the circles are marked inside the field around the goals and opposite the centres of the back-lines.

1.6 Penalty spots 100 mm in diameter are marked in front of the centre of each goal with the centre of each spot 7 metres from the inner edge of the goal-line.

1.7 All lines are 50 mm wide and are part of the field of play.

1.8 Goals are positioned outside the field of play at the centre of and touching each back-line. No equipment or items, such as penalty corner protective equipment, towels, water bottles

etc. may be placed inside the goals.

1.9 A bench for each team is placed outside and along one side of the field of play.

Each team occupies one team bench for substitutes and team officials for the entire match as directed by Regulation or, if not available, by the umpires. More detailed provisions may be made by Regulation.

2 Composition of teams

2.1 A match is played between two teams, with not more than six players of each team on the field at any particular time during the match.

If a team has more than the permitted number of players on the field, time should be stopped to correct the situation. In cases where this situation materially affects the match, a penalty corner is awarded against the team which carried out a substitution incorrectly. A personal penalty may be awarded against the captain of the team involved. Decisions taken prior to correcting the situation cannot be changed, if time and/or play has already been re-started.

2.2 Each team has either a goalkeeper on the field or plays only with field players.

Each team may play with:

– *a goalkeeper wearing a different colour shirt and protective equipment comprising at least headgear, leg guards and kickers; this player is referred to in these Rules as a goalkeeper; or*

– *only field players; no player has goalkeeping*

privileges and no player wears a different colour shirt; no player may wear protective headgear except a face mask when defending a penalty corner or a penalty stroke.

Any change between these options must take place as a substitution.

2.3 Each team is permitted to substitute from its players not on the field:

a substitution is permitted at any time except within the period from the award of a penalty corner until after it has been completed; during this period substitution is only permitted for injury to or suspension of the defending goalkeeper

If another penalty corner is awarded before completion of the previous penalty corner, substitution other than for an injured or suspended defending goalkeeper must not take place until the re-taken penalty corner has been completed.

At a penalty corner, a defending goalkeeper who is injured or suspended may be substituted by another goalkeeper or by a field player.

If a team has only field players, no substitution is permitted at a penalty corner until it has been completed.

If the goalkeeper is suspended, the offending team plays with one fewer player.

b there is no limit to the number of players who are permitted to be substituted at the same time or to the number of times any player is permitted to substitute or be substituted

c substitution of a player is permitted only after that player has left the field

d substitutions are not permitted for suspended players during their suspension

e after completing a suspension, a player is permitted to be substituted without first returning to the field

f time and play are not stopped for substitutions

This includes not stopping the time for a player to put on or take off protective equipment as part of a substitution including following a goalkeeper injury or suspension.

g players must leave or enter the field for substitution purposes within 3 metres of the centre-line on the team bench side of the field.

2.4 Field players who leave the field for injury treatment, refreshment, to change equipment or for some reason other than substitution are only permitted to re-enter within 3 metres of the centre-line on the side of the field used for substitutions.

Leaving and re-entering the field as part of play (e.g. when a defender puts on penalty corner protective equipment) takes place at any appropriate part of the field.

2.5 No persons other than field players, goalkeepers and umpires are permitted on the field during the match without the permission of an umpire.

2.6 Players on or off the field are under the jurisdiction of the umpires throughout the match including the quarter and half-time intervals.

2.7 A player who is injured or bleeding must leave the field unless medical reasons prevent this and must not return until wounds have been covered; players must not wear blood-stained clothing.

3 Captains

3.1 One player of each team must be appointed as captain.

3.2 A replacement captain must be appointed when a captain is suspended.

3.3 Captains must wear a distinctive arm-band or similar distinguishing article on an upper arm or shoulder or over the upper part of a sock.

3.4 Captains are responsible for the behaviour of all players on their team and for ensuring that substitutions of players on their team are carried out correctly.

> *A penalty corner is awarded if a substitution does not take place correctly in accordance with Rule 2.1. A personal penalty may be awarded in accordance with Rule 2.1 or if a captain does not exercise any other responsibility.*

4 Players' clothing and equipment

> *Competition Regulations available from the FIH website provide additional information and requirements about players' clothing, personal equipment and advertising. Refer also to regulations established by Continental Federations and National Associations.*

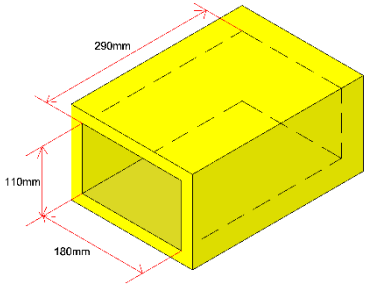
4.1 Field players of the same team must wear uniform clothing.

> *Each field player within a team can choose to wear shorts, a skort or a skirt, as long as they are the same colour and design.*

4.2 Players must not wear anything which is dangerous to other players.

Field players:

– *are permitted to wear hand protection which does not increase the natural size of the hands significantly; any hand protection used, both for normal play and to defend penalty corners, must fit comfortably (without the need for compressing it) into an open-ended box of internal dimensions 290 mm long x 180 mm wide x 110 mm high;*



– *are strongly recommended to wear shin, ankle and mouth protection;*

– *are permitted to wear any form of body protection (including leg protection, or knee pads, when defending a penalty corner) underneath normal playing clothing; knee pads, used for this purpose, may be worn outside the socks provided that their colour is exactly the same as the colour of the socks or black;*

- *are permitted to wear throughout a match for medical reasons only a smooth preferably transparent or single coloured face mask which closely fits the face, soft protective head-covering or eye protection in the form of plastic goggles (i.e. goggles with a soft-covered frame and plastic lenses); the medical reasons must be assessed by an appropriate authority and the player concerned must understand the possible implications of playing with the medical condition;*

- *are strongly recommended to wear a smooth preferably transparent or single coloured face mask or metal grill face mask, which closely follows the contours of the face when defending a penalty corner or penalty stroke;*

- *are not permitted, when wearing face masks, to conduct themselves in a manner which is dangerous to other players by taking advantage of the protective equipment they wear;*

- *are not permitted to wear protective headgear (face mask or other protective head covering) in any other circumstances.*

4.3 Goalkeepers must wear a shirt or garment which is different in colour from that of both teams.

Goalkeepers must wear this shirt or garment over any upper body protection. Elbow protection does not need to be covered by the shirt or garment.

4.4 Goalkeepers must wear protective equipment comprising at least headgear, leg guards and kickers except that the headgear and any hand protectors may be removed when taking a penalty stroke.

The following are permitted for use only by goalkeepers: body, upper arm, elbow, forearm, and thigh protectors, leg guards and kickers.

4.5 Clothing or protective equipment which significantly increases the natural size of a goalkeeper's body or area of protection is not permitted.

4.6 Players must not use or be equipped with any device to send or receive communication.

4.7 The stick has a traditional shape with a handle and a curved head which is flat on its left side:

a the stick must be smooth and must not have any rough or sharp parts

b inclusive of any additional coverings used, the stick must be able to pass through a ring with an interior diameter of 51 mm

c any curvature along the length of the stick (the rake or bow) must have a continuous smooth profile along the whole length, must occur along the face side or the back of the stick but not both and is limited to a depth of 25 mm

d the stick must conform with the specification agreed by the FIH Rules Committee.

4.8 The ball is spherical, hard and white (or an agreed colour which contrasts with the playing surface).

Detailed specifications of the stick, ball and goalkeeper's equipment are provided in a separate section at the end of these Rules.

5 Match and result

5.1 A match consists of four quarters of 10 minutes, an interval of 1 minute between quarter 1 and 2 and between quarter 3 and 4 and a half-time interval of 5 minutes.

Other durations of periods and intervals may be agreed by both teams except as specified in Regulations for particular competitions. This includes the possibility to deviate from Rule 13.3 (a) with respect to stopping and re-starting time and play after the award of a penalty corner and from Rule 14.1 in relation to the duration of suspensions.

If time expires just before an umpire would otherwise have made a decision, umpires are permitted to make that decision immediately after the end of the quarter.

If an incident arises immediately before the end of a quarter which requires review by the umpires, the review may be conducted even though time has subsequently been completed and signalled. The review should take place immediately and action taken to revert to and correct the situation as appropriate.

5.2 The team scoring the most goals is the winner; if no goals are scored, or if the teams score an equal number of goals, the match is drawn.

Information about a Shoot-out competition as a way of reaching a result in a drawn match is available in the FIH tournament regulations.

6 Start and re-start play

6.1 A coin is tossed:

a the team which wins the toss has the choice of which goal to attack in the first half of the match or to start the first two quarters with a centre pass

b if the team winning the toss chooses which goal to attack in the first half of the match, the opposing team starts the first two quarters with a centre-pass

c if the team winning the toss chooses to start the first two quarters of the match with a centre-pass, the opposing team has the choice of which goal to attack in the first half.

6.2 Direction of play is reversed in the second half of the match.

6.3 A centre pass is taken:

a to start the first two quarters by a player from the team winning the toss if they chose this option; otherwise by a player from the opposing team

b to start the third and fourth quarter by a player of the team which did not take the centre pass to start the first two quarters

c after a goal by a player of the team against which the goal was scored.

6.4 Taking a centre pass:

a taken at the centre of the field

b it is permitted to play the ball in any direction

c all players other than the player taking the centre pass must be in the half of the field which includes the goal

they are defending

d the procedures for taking a free push apply.

6.5 A bully takes place to re-start play when time or play has been stopped for an injury or for any other reason and no penalty has been awarded:

a a bully is taken close to the location of the ball when play was stopped but not within 9 metres of the back-line and not within 3 metres of the circle

b the ball is placed between one player from each team who face each other with the goal they are defending to their right

c the two players start with their sticks on the ground to the right of the ball and then tap the flat faces of their sticks together once just over the ball after which either player is permitted to play the ball

d all other players must be at least 3 metres from the ball.

6.6 A free push is taken by a defender 9.10 metres in front of the centre of the goal-line to re-start play when a penalty stroke has been completed and no goal has been scored.

7 Ball outside the field

7.1 The ball is out of play when it passes completely over the side-board or back-line.

7.2 Play is re-started by a player of the team, which was not the last team to touch or play the ball before it went out of play.

7.3 When the ball travels over the side-board:

a play is re-started within 1 metre of where the ball

crossed the board

If this would result in a re-start inside the circle, play is instead re-started with the ball 1 metre outside the circle and 1 metre from the side-board.

b the procedures for taking a free push apply.

7.4 When the ball is played over the back-line and no goal is scored:

a If played by an attacker, play is re-started with the ball up to 9.10 metres from and in line with where it crossed the back-line and the procedures for taking a free push apply

b If played unintentionally by a defender or deflected by a goalkeeper, play is re-started with the ball on the centre-line and in line with where it crossed the back-line and the procedures for taking a free push apply

With the ball being placed on the line, the re-start is effectively within the attacking half and the provisions for taking a free push are applicable.

c if played intentionally by a defender, unless deflected by a goalkeeper, play is re-started with a penalty corner.

8 Method of scoring

8.1 A goal is scored when the ball is played within the circle by an attacker and does not travel outside the circle before passing completely over the goal-line and under the cross-bar.

The ball may be played by a defender or touch their body before or after being played in the circle by an attacker.

For the sake of clarity time is not stopped after a goal has been scored.

9 Conduct of play: players

9.1 Players are expected to act fairly and responsibly at all times.

9.2 Players on the field must hold their stick and not use it in a dangerous way.

Players must not lift their stick over the heads of other players.

9.3 Players must not touch, handle or interfere with other players or their sticks or clothing.

9.4 Players must not intimidate or impede another player.

9.5 Players must not hit the ball.

9.6 Players must not play the ball with the back of the stick.

9.7 Players must not play the ball with any part of the stick when the ball is above shoulder height except that defenders are permitted to use the stick to stop or deflect a shot at goal at any height.

When saving a shot at goal, a defender must not be penalised if their stick is not motionless or is travelling towards the ball while attempting to stop or deflect the shot. Only if the ball is genuinely hit and a goal is prevented should a penalty stroke be awarded.

If a defender attempts to stop or deflect a ball travelling towards the goal which will actually miss the goal, any use of the stick above the shoulder must be penalised by a penalty corner and not a penalty stroke.

If dangerous play results after a legitimate stop or deflection, a penalty corner must be awarded.

9.8 Players must not play the ball dangerously or in a way which leads to dangerous play.

A ball is also considered dangerous when it causes legitimate evasive action by an opponent.

The offence is considered to occur where the danger arises. An exception applies where a ball is deflected by a defender outside the defending circle and subsequently causes danger to an attacker inside the circle; in such a case, a free push is awarded outside the circle at the place of the deflection.

Playing the ball deliberately and hard into an opponent's stick, feet or hands when that opponent is in a 'set' or stationary position, creating a risk of injury, is dangerous. Likewise, collecting, turning and deliberately trying to play the ball through a defending player who is either close to the player in possession or is attempting to play the ball is dangerous. A personal penalty may also be awarded to the offending player.

9.9 Players must not raise the ball off the field except for a shot at goal.

It is not an offence if the ball rises unintentionally off the field by less than 100 mm unless an opponent is within playing distance of the ball.

9.10 Players must not play the ball when it is in the air but may stop it.

It is permitted to bring a ball in the air under control by pressing it down with the flat side of

the stick.

A goal cannot be scored unless the ball is on the ground at the last contact by an attacker before the ball enters the goal.

9.11 Field players must not stop, kick, propel, pick up, throw or carry the ball with any part of their body.

It is not always an offence if the ball touches the foot, hand or body of a field player. The player only commits an offence if they gain an advantage or if they position themselves with the intention of stopping the ball in this way.

It is not an offence if the ball touches the hand holding the stick but would otherwise have touched the stick.

9.12 Field players must not play the ball while lying on the field or with a knee, arm or hand on the field, other than the hand holding the stick.

9.13 Players must not obstruct an opponent who is attempting to play the ball.

Players obstruct if they:

– *back into an opponent*

– *physically interfere with the stick or body of an opponent*

– *shield the ball from a legitimate tackle with their stick or any part of their body.*

A stationary player receiving the ball is permitted to face in any direction.

A player with the ball is permitted to move off

with it in any direction except bodily into an opponent or into a position between the ball and an opponent who is within playing distance of the ball and attempting to play it.

A player who runs in front of or blocks an opponent to stop them legitimately playing or attempting to play the ball is obstructing (this is third party or shadow obstruction). This also applies if an attacker runs across or blocks defenders (including the goalkeeper) when a penalty corner is being taken.

9.14 Players must not trap or hold the ball against the side-boards. A player in possession of the ball must not be trapped in the corner of the field or against the side-boards by opponents with their sticks flat on the floor. Opponents must leave a reasonable outlet through which the ball may be played.

If the ball becomes unintentionally trapped between players' sticks or against the side-boards, play is re-started with a bully.

Repeated instances of players trapping or holding the ball against the side-boards should be regarded as intentional offences and penalised accordingly.

Similarly, players who deliberately trap the ball between their own stick and an opponent's stick should be penalised and not rewarded with a bully.

9.15 Players must not tackle unless in a position to play the ball without body contact.

Reckless play, such as sliding tackles and other overly physical challenges by field players, which take an opponent to ground, and which have the potential to cause injury should attract

appropriate match and personal penalties.

9.16 Players must not intentionally enter the goal their opponents are defending or run behind either goal.

9.17 Players must not change their stick between the award and completion of a penalty corner or penalty stroke unless it no longer meets the stick specification.

9.18 Players must not throw any object or piece of equipment onto the field, at the ball, or at another player, umpire or person.

> *If the ball touches any loose object on the field (that has not been thrown by a player), play continues unless otherwise specified in Rule 13.3 (m).*

9.19 Players must not delay play to gain benefit by time-wasting.

10 Conduct of play: goalkeepers

10.1 A goalkeeper must not take part in the match outside the half of the field they are defending, except when taking a penalty stroke.

> *Protective headgear must be worn by a goalkeeper at all times, except when taking a penalty stroke.*

10.2 When the ball is inside the circle they are defending and they have their stick in their hand:

a goalkeepers are permitted to use their stick, feet, kickers, legs or leg guards to propel the ball when it is on the ground and to use their stick, feet, kickers, legs, leg guards or any other part of their body to stop the ball or deflect it in any direction, including when the ball is in the air and including over the back-line

> *Goalkeepers are not permitted to conduct*

themselves in a manner which is dangerous to other players by taking advantage of the protective equipment they wear.

b goalkeepers are permitted to use arms, hands and any other part of their body to push the ball away when it is on the ground.

The action in rule b above is permitted only as part of a goal saving action or to move the ball away from the possibility of a goal scoring action by opponents. It does not permit a goalkeeper to propel the ball forcefully with arms, hands or body so that it travels a long distance.

10.3 Goalkeepers must not lie on the ball.

10.4 When the ball is outside the circle they are defending, goalkeepers are only permitted to play the ball with their stick.

10.5 Goalkeepers are permitted to play the ball inside the circle while lying on the field inside the circle.

11 Conduct of play: umpires

11.1 Two umpires control the match, apply the Rules and are the judges of fair play.

11.2 Each umpire has primary responsibility for decisions in one half of the field for the duration of the match.

11.3 Each umpire is responsible for decisions on free pushes in the circle, penalty corners, penalty strokes and goals in one half of the field.

11.4 Umpires are responsible for keeping a record of goals scored and of suspension cards used.

11.5 Umpires are responsible for ensuring that the full time is

played and for indicating the end of time for each quarter and for the completion of a penalty corner if a quarter is prolonged.

11.6 Umpires blow the whistle to:

a start and end each quarter of the match

b indicate, when necessary, that the ball is out of play

c start a bully

d award a penalty

e indicate that a penalty corner is to be re-taken

f start a penalty corner

g start and end a penalty stroke

h indicate a goal and re-start play

i re-start time and play after a penalty stroke when a goal was not scored

j stop time and play to issue a personal penalty and to re-start time and play

k stop time and play for any other reason and to re-start time and play.

If a dedicated timekeeper is available, they may be responsible for timing the match and suspensions and for indicating when a player or team official has completed their suspension. More detailed provisions may be made by Regulation.

11.7 Umpires must not coach during a match.

11.8 If the ball touches an umpire or unauthorised person on the field, play shall continue unless one team is disadvantaged; in such cases, play shall be re-started with a bully.

12 Penalties

12.1 Advantage: a penalty is awarded when a player or team has been disadvantaged by an opponent breaking the Rules.

12.2 A free push is awarded to the opposing team:

a for an offence by an attacker in the half of the field they are attacking

b for an unintentional offence by a defender outside the circle but within the half of the field they are defending.

12.3 A penalty corner is awarded:

a for an offence by a defender in the circle which does not prevent the probable scoring of a goal

b for an intentional offence in the circle by a defender against an opponent who does not have possession of the ball or an opportunity to play the ball

c for an intentional offence by a defender outside the circle but within the half of the field they are defending

d for intentionally playing the ball over the back-line by a defender

Goalkeepers are permitted to deflect the ball with their stick, protective equipment or any part of their body in any direction including over the back-line.

e against the team which carried out a substitution incorrectly

f when the ball becomes lodged in a player's clothing or equipment while in the circle they are defending.

12.4 A penalty stroke is awarded:

a for an offence by a defender in the circle which prevents the probable scoring of a goal

b for an intentional offence in the circle by a defender against an opponent who has possession of the ball or an opportunity to play the ball.

12.5 If there is another offence or misconduct before the awarded penalty has been taken:

a a more severe penalty may be awarded

b a personal penalty may be awarded

c the penalty may be reversed if the subsequent offence was committed by the team first awarded the penalty.

13 Procedures for taking penalties

13.1 Location of a free push:

a a free push is taken close to where the offence occurred

'Close to' means within playing distance of where the offence occurred and with no significant advantage gained.

The location from which a free push is taken must be more precise when the offence occurs close to the circle.

b a free push awarded to the defence within 9.10 metres

of the back-line is taken up to 9.10 metres from the back-line in line with the location of the offence, parallel to the side-board

A free push to the defence awarded in the circle may be taken anywhere in the circle.

13.2 Procedures for taking a free push, centre pass and putting the ball back into play after it has been outside the field:

All parts of this Rule apply as appropriate to a free push, centre pass and putting the ball back into play after it has been outside the field.

a the ball must be stationary

b opponents must be at least 3 metres from the ball

If an opponent is within 3 metres of the ball, they must not interfere with the taking of the free push or must not play or attempt to play the ball. If this player is not playing the ball, attempting to play the ball or influencing play, the free push need not be delayed.

An opponent who is within 3 metres of the ball when the free push is taken must not play or attempt to play the ball until they are at least 3 metres from the ball, or until the ball has either travelled at least 3 metres or been touched by a defending player who can legitimately play the ball.

The offence is considered to occur at the place where the opponent interferes with play.

c when a free push is awarded to the attack within the half of the field they are attacking, all players other than the player taking the free push must be at least 3 metres from the ball, except as specifically indicated below for attacking free pushes awarded within 3

metres of the circle

d the ball is moved using a push

The player taking the free push may play the ball again without another player having touched it (self-pass).

e from a free push awarded to the attack within the half of the field they are attacking, the ball must not enter the circle until it has been played by an attacker after it has travelled at least 3 metres, not necessarily in a single direction, or has been touched by a player of the defending team. The ball may also enter the circle off the side-boards, providing that it has travelled at least 3 metres before rebounding off them.

If the free push is taken as a self-pass (i.e. no defending player has yet touched it) the player taking the self-pass may play the ball any number of times, but the ball must travel at least 3 metres before that player plays the ball into the circle by pushing the ball again.

Alternatively, once a defending player has touched the ball, the requirements of this Rule no longer apply, and the ball may enter the circle.

Any breach of this Rule is considered to occur at the point where the ball enters the circle.

If the free push is awarded within 3 metres of the circle and is taken immediately the defenders who are inside the circle within 3 metres of the free push may shadow around the inside of the circle a player who takes a self-pass, provided that they do not play or attempt to play the ball or interfere with play until it has either travelled at least 3 metres or alternatively been touched by a defending player who can legitimately play the

ball. If the attacker chooses not to take the free push immediately, all other players must be at least 3 metres from the ball before the free push is taken.

Other than as indicated above, any playing of the ball, attempting to play the ball or interference by a defender or an attacker who was not 3 metres from the ball, should be penalised accordingly.

13.3 Taking a penalty corner:

a time and play are stopped on the award of a penalty corner and re-started when the teams are ready

Teams should take up their positions for the taking of a penalty corner and put on penalty corner protective equipment without delay (as a guide up to 30 seconds).

b the ball is placed on the back-line inside the circle at least 6 metres from the goal-post on whichever side of the goal the attacking team prefers

c the injector must have at least one foot outside the field

d the other attackers must be on the field, outside the circle with sticks, hands and feet not touching the ground inside the circle

e no attacker other than the injector is permitted to be within 3 metres of the ball when the push is taken

f the defending goalkeeper if there is one, must be in the goal; up to five other members of the defending team may be positioned behind the back-line on the side of the goal furthest from where the penalty corner is being taken with their sticks, hands and feet not touching the ground inside the field

If the team defending a penalty corner has chosen to play only with field players, up to six members of the defending team may be positioned behind the back-line outside the goal.

g any defender not behind the back-line must be beyond the top of the circle at the other end of the field i.e. within 9.1 metres of the back-line at the far end of the field.

h until the ball has been played, no attacker other than the injector is permitted to enter the circle and no defender is permitted to cross the back-line or the line 9.1 metres from the back-line at the far end of the field.

i the injector pushes the ball immediately after the start of the penalty corner without intentionally raising it

j after playing the ball, the injector must not play the ball again or approach within playing distance of it until it has been played by another player

k a goal cannot be scored until the ball has travelled outside the circle

l it is permitted to raise the ball to any height but this must not be dangerous

A defender who is clearly running into the shot or into the taker without attempting to play the ball with their stick must be penalised for dangerous play.

Otherwise, if a defender is within 3 metres of the first shot at goal during the taking of a penalty corner and is struck by the ball below the knee, another penalty corner must be awarded. If the defender is struck on or above the knee in a normal stance, the shot is judged to be

dangerous, and a free push must be awarded to the defending team.

m field players should remove their penalty corner protective equipment safely and as soon as they are able to do so after the penalty corner is completed.

It is permitted, but not recommended, to remove penalty corner protective equipment before the completion of the penalty corner provided it is done safely.

The primary objective of penalty corner protective equipment is player safety. Therefore, if no suitable opportunity to remove penalty corner protective equipment arises, field players may continue to wear it after the completion of the penalty corner, subject to the following provisions: All field players must remove all penalty corner protective equipment before taking part in play outside the half they are defending. When the ball is played over the back-line or the side-board by an attacker, or a free push is awarded to the defending team, defenders who are still wearing penalty corner protective equipment must remove it. As the sole exception, a player may immediately pass the ball while still wearing such equipment, provided that the pass is played from within the half they are defending. Thereafter, no player wearing penalty corner protective equipment may take part in play until the equipment has been removed. Any breach is penalised with a free push to the opposing team if it occurs outside the circle, or a penalty corner if it occurs inside the circle, unless for the action itself a more severe penalty is appropriate.

Following a penalty corner, if the ball touches any discarded penalty corner protective

equipment, a free push shall be awarded if this occurs outside the circle, whereas if it occurs inside the circle a penalty corner shall be awarded unless the action prevents the probable scoring of a goal, in which case a penalty stroke shall be awarded.

Following a penalty corner, it is considered dangerous and negligent behaviour if a defender throws any penalty corner protective equipment and it strikes an opponent, an umpire, or it strikes any other person outside the field of play. In such cases, this player must be suspended (yellow card) if the person is struck on or above the knee in a normal stance. If time and play are stopped for this reason and the ball is outside the circle at the time of the incident, play will be re-started with a free push to the opposing team at the place where the ball was. If the ball is inside the circle when time and play are stopped, play shall be re-started with a penalty corner, unless the conditions of Rule 12.4 are met, in which case a penalty stroke shall be awarded.

13.4 The match is prolonged at the end of each quarter and full-time to allow completion of a penalty corner or any subsequent penalty corner or penalty stroke.

13.5 The penalty corner is completed when:

a a goal is scored

b a free push is awarded to the defending team

c the ball travels more than 3 metres from the circle

d the ball is played over the back-line and a penalty corner is not awarded

e the ball travels over a side-board and a penalty corner

is not awarded

f a defender commits an offence which does not result in another penalty corner

g a penalty stroke is awarded

h a bully is awarded.

13.6 For an offence during the taking of a penalty corner:

a the injector does not have at least one foot outside the field: the penalty corner is taken again

b the injector plays the ball before the start of the penalty corner, does not play the ball immediately after the start or feints at playing the ball, the offending player is required to go to within 9.1 metres of the back-line at the far end of the field but is replaced by another attacker: the penalty corner is taken again

If this feinting leads to what otherwise would be a breach of this Rule by a defender, only the attacker is required to go to within 9.1 metres of the back-line at the far end of the field.

c a defender, other than the goalkeeper, crosses the back-line before permitted, the offending player is required to go to within 9.1 metres of the back-line at the far end of the field and cannot be replaced by another defender: the penalty corner is taken again

If a defender at this or any subsequently re-taken penalty corner crosses the back-line before permitted, the offending player is also required to go to within 9.1 metres of the back-line at the far end of the field and cannot be replaced.

If a defender crosses the line 9.1 metres from

the back-line at the far end of the field before permitted, the penalty corner is taken again.

d a goalkeeper crosses the goal-line before permitted, the defending team defends the penalty corner with one fewer player: the penalty corner is taken again

The defending team nominates which player is required to go to within 9.1 metres of the back-line at the far end of the field, and they cannot be replaced by another defender.

If the action of breaking the line too early is repeated during the same penalty corner, the defending team is required to nominate a further player to go to within 9.1 metres of the back-line at the far end of the field, and they cannot be replaced.

A penalty corner is considered as re-taken until any of the conditions of Rule 13.5 for its completion are met.

A subsequently awarded penalty corner, as opposed to a re-taken penalty corner, may be defended by up to six players.

e an attacker enters the circle before permitted, the injector is required to go to a point within 9.1 metres of the back-line at the far end of the field: the penalty corner is taken again.

Attackers who are sent to within 9.1 metres of the back-line at the far end of the field may not return for re-taken penalty corners, but may do so for a subsequently awarded penalty corner.

f for any other offence by attackers: a free push is awarded to the defence.

Except as specified above, a free push, penalty corner or penalty stroke is awarded as specified elsewhere in the Rules.

When a penalty corner is to be re-taken or another penalty corner is subsequently awarded, time and play are stopped and re-started when the teams are ready. Teams should take up their positions for the re-taken or subsequently awarded penalty corner without delay.

13.7 Taking a penalty stroke:

a time and play are stopped when a penalty stroke is awarded

b all players on the field other than the player taking the penalty stroke and the player defending it must stand outside the half of the field in which the penalty stroke is being taken and must not influence the taking of the penalty stroke

c the ball is placed on the penalty spot

d the player taking the penalty stroke must stand behind and within playing distance of the ball before the whistle is blown to start the penalty stroke

e the player defending the penalty stroke must stand with both feet on the goal-line and, once the whistle has been blown to start the penalty stroke, must not leave the goal-line or move either foot until the ball has been played.

f if the player defending the penalty stroke is a goalkeeper they must wear protective headgear; if the player defending the penalty stroke is otherwise taking part in the game as a field player, they may wear only a face mask as protective equipment

If the team defending a penalty stroke has chosen to play only with field players and not to use a substitute goalkeeper to defend the penalty stroke, the defender may only use their stick to make a save.

g the whistle is blown when the player taking the penalty stroke and the player defending it are in position

h the player taking the penalty stroke must not take it until the whistle has been blown

The player taking the penalty stroke or the player defending it must not delay the taking of the penalty stroke.

i the player taking the penalty stroke must not feint at playing the ball

j the player taking the penalty stroke must push, flick or scoop the ball and is permitted to raise it to any height

Using a 'dragging' action to play the ball at a penalty stroke is not permitted.

k the player taking the penalty stroke must play the ball only once and must not subsequently approach either the ball or the player defending the penalty stroke.

13.8 The penalty stroke is completed when

a a goal is scored

b the ball comes to rest inside the circle, lodges in the goalkeeper's equipment, is caught by the goalkeeper or goes outside the circle.

13.9 For an offence during the taking of a penalty stroke:

a the penalty stroke is taken before the whistle is blown and the ball enters the goal: the penalty stroke is taken again

b the penalty stroke is taken before the whistle is blown and a goal is not scored: a free push is awarded to the defence

c for any other offence by the player taking the penalty stroke: a free push is awarded to the defence

d for any offence by the player defending the penalty stroke including moving either foot before the ball has been played: the penalty stroke is taken again

If the player defending the penalty stroke prevents a goal being scored but moves either foot before the ball has been played, this player may be cautioned and for any subsequent offence must be suspended (green card).

If a goal is scored even though there has been an offence by the player defending the penalty stroke, the goal is awarded.

e for an offence by a player of the defending team and a goal is not scored: the penalty stroke is taken again

f for an offence by a player of the attacking team other than the player taking the penalty stroke and the ball enters the goal: the penalty stroke is taken again.

14 Personal penalties

14.1 For any offence, the offending player or team official may be:

a cautioned (indicated by spoken words)

b temporarily suspended for 1 minute of playing time

(indicated by a green card)

c temporarily suspended for 2 or 4 minutes of playing time (indicated by a yellow card)

d permanently suspended from the current match (indicated by a red card).

The same player or team official should not receive two green or two yellow cards during the same match, even for different types of offences. A player or a team official who has already received a personal penalty must be sanctioned with a higher-category personal penalty for the next offence for which a card would otherwise be awarded. Cards awarded for a team offence (for example under Rule 2.1 or 3.4 involving the captain) are not taken into account for this purpose; in such cases the player may receive a second green or yellow card.

A personal penalty may also be awarded in addition to the appropriate match penalty.

14.2 Temporarily suspended players on or off the field and team officials must remain in a designated place until permitted by the umpire who suspended them to resume play. While suspended, they must not coach, shout or engage in any other loud verbal communication with players, team officials or umpires, or undertake any team duties. For the duration of each temporary suspension the offending team plays with one fewer player.

The temporary suspension commences when the player is seated in the designated place.

Temporarily suspended players and team officials are permitted to re-join their team at a quarter or half-time interval after which they must return to a designated place to complete their

suspension.

Temporarily suspended players must return to the field within 3 metres of the centre-line after the expiry of their suspension unless they are substituted.

14.3 Misconduct by a player or team official while suspended must be sanctioned with a higher-category personal penalty.

If a further personal penalty is awarded, the duration of the new suspension starts from the time it is imposed; any remaining time of the previous suspension is not included.

As an exception, if the intended duration of a temporary yellow card suspension is 2 minutes, it may be extended to 4 minutes; in this case the additional 2 minutes are added to the remaining suspension time.

14.4 Permanently suspended players and team officials must leave the field and its surrounding area. The offending team plays for the remainder of the match with one fewer player.

1 Objectives

1.1 Umpiring indoor hockey is a challenging but rewarding way to participate in the game

1.2 Umpires contribute to the game by:

a helping to raise the standard of the game at all levels by ensuring that players observe the Rules

b ensuring that every game is played in the right spirit

c helping to increase the enjoyment of the game for players, spectators, and others.

1.3 These objectives can be achieved by umpires being

a consistent: umpires maintain the respect of players by being consistent

b fair: decisions must be made with a sense of justice and integrity

c prepared: no matter how long an umpire has been officiating, it is important to prepare thoroughly for every match

d focused: concentration must be maintained at all times; nothing must be allowed to distract an umpire

e approachable: a good understanding of the Rules must be combined with a good rapport with the players

f skilled: umpires must aim to become better with each and every match

g natural: an umpire must be themselves, and not try to

be something or someone they are not, at all times.

1.4 Umpires must:

a have a thorough knowledge of the Rules of Indoor Hockey but remember that the spirit of the Rule and common sense must govern interpretation

b support and encourage skilful play, deal promptly and firmly with offences and apply the appropriate penalties

c establish control and maintain it throughout the match

d use all the available tools for control

e apply the advantage Rule as much as possible to assist a flowing and open match but without losing control.

2 Applying the Rules

2.1 Protecting skilful play and penalising offences:

a the relative seriousness of an offence must be identified and serious offences such as dangerous or rough play dealt with early and firmly in a match

b intentional offences must be penalised firmly

c umpires must demonstrate that if players co-operate, skilful play will be protected and the match will be interrupted only when essential for its proper conduct.

2.2 Advantage:

a it is not necessary for every offence to be penalised when no benefit is gained by the offender; unnecessary interruptions to the flow of the match cause undue delay and irritation

b when the Rules have been broken, an umpire must apply advantage if this is the most severe penalty

c possession of the ball does not automatically mean there is an advantage; for advantage to apply, the player/team with the ball must be able to develop their play

d having decided to play advantage, a second opportunity must not be given by reverting to the original penalty

e it is important to anticipate the flow of the match, to look beyond the action of the moment and to be aware of potential developments in the match.

2.3 Control:

a decisions must be made promptly, positively, clearly and consistently

b strict action early in a match will usually discourage repetition of an offence

c it is not acceptable for players or team officials to abuse opponents, umpires or other technical officials verbally or through body language and attitude. Umpires must deal firmly with abuse of this sort and in appropriate circumstances issue a caution, a temporary suspension (green or yellow card) or permanent suspension (red card). Cautions and suspensions can be given in isolation or in combination with another penalty

d cautions can be given to players in close proximity without stopping the match

e there must be a clear difference between the duration of a yellow card suspension for a minor offence (2

minutes) and the duration for a more serious and/or physical offence (4 minutes)

f when a player or team official intentionally misbehaves in a serious manner towards another player, umpire or other match official the red card must be shown immediately.

2.4 Penalties:

a a wide range of penalties is available

b two penalties can be used together to deal with bad or persistent offences, such as a penalty corner and a personal penalty.

3 Umpiring qualities & skills

3.1 The main umpiring qualities and skills are:

a match preparation

b whistling

c signalling

d co-operation

e communication

f mobility and positioning.

3.2 Match preparation:

a umpires must prepare thoroughly for each match by arriving at the field in good time

b before the match commences, both umpires must check the field markings, the goals and the nets and

check for any dangerous playing equipment or field equipment

c the two umpires must wear similar colours to one another, but different from those of both teams

d footwear must suit field conditions and assist mobility

e umpiring equipment includes access to the current Indoor Rules, a loud and distinctive whistle, a stopwatch, coloured cards (green, yellow and red) to indicate personal penalties and a way to record match details.

3.3 Whistling:

a the whistle is the main way in which umpires communicate with players, each other and other persons involved in the match

b the whistle must be blown decisively and loudly enough for all involved in the match to be able to hear it. This does not mean long loud whistling at all times.

c the tone and duration of the whistle must be varied to communicate the seriousness of offences to players.

3.4 Signalling

a signals must be clear and held up long enough to ensure that all players and the other umpire are aware of decisions

b only the official signals must be used

c it is preferable to be stationary when giving a signal

d directional signals must not be made across the body

e it is bad practice to look away from the players when a

signal or decision is made; further offences might be missed, concentration can be lost, or this can indicate a lack of confidence.

3.5 Co-operation

a good team-work and co-operation between umpires including good eye-contact and, if available, the effective use of the communication system throughout the match is essential

b prior to a match, umpires must discuss and agree how they are going to work together to assist each other

c umpires must take responsibility and be prepared to assist when their colleague is unsighted or has difficulty seeing certain parts of the field. If necessary and if mobility is good, umpires must be prepared to cross the centre-line and go as far as appropriate into a colleague's half of the field to assist. This helps to reassure players that decisions are correct

d a record of goals scored and cards issued must be kept by both umpires and confirmed at the end of the match.

3.6 Communication:

a in addition to whistle communication and signals, verbal communication should be used only where appropriate to prevent offences, manage players or address player welfare

b explanations of decisions should be concise and must not lead to prolonged discussion

c umpires must remain calm, respectful and confident in all interactions

d appropriate use of tone and body language can assist

match control and flow

e unnecessary or excessive communication must be avoided.

3.7 Mobility and positioning

a umpires must be mobile so they can move to appropriate positions throughout the match.

b static umpires cannot view play clearly enough to make correct decisions at all times

c fit, mobile and well positioned umpires are better able to concentrate on the flow of the match and on the decisions which need to be made

d each umpire operates mainly in half of the field with the centre-line to their left

e for play between the centre-line and circle, umpires must be positioned near their side-board

f in general, the most suitable position for umpires is ahead of and on the right of the attacking team

g when play is in the circle, umpires must move further into the field away from the side-boards and, when necessary, into the circle itself to see important offences and to judge whether shots at goal are legitimate

h for penalty corners and after the ball has gone outside the field, umpires must take up a position which gives a clear view of all potential action

i for penalty strokes, the controlling umpire must take up a position behind and to the right of the player taking the penalty stroke, the supporting umpire takes up a position on the back-line, to the left of the goal

j umpires must not allow their positioning to interfere with the flow of play

k umpires must face play all the time.

4 Umpiring signals

4.1 Timing

a start time: turn towards the other umpire with one arm straight up in the air

b stop time: turn towards the other umpire and cross fully-extended arms at the wrists above the head

c two minutes of play remaining: raise both hands straight up in the air with pointing index fingers

d one minute of play remaining: raise one hand straight up in the air with pointing index finger.

Once a timing signal has been acknowledged no further time signal is needed.

4.2 Bully: move hands alternately up and down in front of the body with palms facing each other.

4.3 Ball out of play

a ball out of play over the side-board: indicate the direction with one arm raised horizontally

b ball out of play over the back-line by an attacker: face the centre of the field and extend both arms horizontally sideways.

c ball out of play over the back-line unintentionally by a defender: using right or left arm as appropriate, with the arm well below shoulder level, draw an imaginary

line from the point where the ball crossed the back-line to the point on the centre-line from which the re-start should be taken.

4.4 Goal scored: point both arms horizontally towards the centre of the field.

4.5 Conduct of play

Signals for conduct of play offences must be shown if there is doubt about the reason for the decision.

a dangerous play: place one forearm diagonally across the chest

b misconduct and/or bad temper: stop play and make a calming movement by moving both hands slowly up and down, palms downward, in front of the body

c kick: slightly raise a leg and touch it near the foot or ankle with the hand

d raised ball: hold palms facing each other horizontally in front of the body, with one palm approximately 150 mm above the other

e obstruction: hold crossed forearms in front of the chest

f third party or shadow obstruction: alternately open and close crossed forearms in front of the chest.

g stick obstruction: hold one arm out and downwards in front of the body half-way between vertical and horizontal; touch the forearm with the other hand

h 3 metres distance: extend one arm straight up in the air showing an open hand with three fingers extended.

4.6 Penalties

a advantage: extend one arm high from the shoulder in the direction in which the benefiting team is playing

b free push: indicate the direction with one arm raised horizontally

c penalty corner: point both arms horizontally towards the goal; this signal also indicates time stopped

d penalty stroke: point one arm at the penalty stroke mark and the other straight up in the air; this signal also indicates time stopped.

FIELD AND EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

Diagrams are provided to assist interpretation of these specifications, but they are not necessarily drawn to scale. The text is the definitive specification.

1 Field and field equipment

1.1 The recommended size of the field of play is rectangular, 44 metres long bounded by side-boards and 22 metres wide bounded by back- lines.

Use of a full-size field of play is strongly recommended but a smaller size field may be specified in regulations. The minimum size of a field of play is 36 metres long and 18 metres wide.

Minimum "run-off" areas are recommended outside the back-lines (3 metres) and side-boards (1 metre).

1.2 Markings:

a no marks other than those described in this Rule are to be made on the playing surface

If indoor hockey is played on a surface marked with lines for other sports which cannot easily be removed, they must be a distinctive colour.

b lines are 50 mm wide and must be clearly marked along their entire length

c the back-lines and all markings enclosed between them and the side-boards are part of the field of play

1.3 All marks must be made in a colour which contrasts with the playing surface. Side-boards:

a mark the 36.00 to 44.00 metres long perimeter of the field of play

b are based on a square 100 mm cross-section

c the upright surface facing the field of play is inclined by 10 mm towards the field.

Side-boards must be made of wood or materials with similar physical properties. They must not having fittings or supports which are dangerous to players or umpires.

1.4 Lines and other marks:

a back-lines: 18.00 to 22.00 metres long perimeter lines

b goal-lines: the parts of the back-lines between the goal-posts

c centre-line: across the middle of the field

d lines 300 mm long marked inside the field on each back-line on both sides of the goal at 6 metres from the outer edge of the nearer goal-post, as measured between the furthest edges of each line

e lines 150 mm long marked outside the field on each back-line 1.50 metres from the centre of the back-line, as measured between the nearest edges of these lines

f penalty spots 100 mm in diameter marked in front of the centre of each goal with the centre of each spot 7 metres from the inner edge of the goal-line.

1.5 Circles:

a lines 3.00 metres long and parallel to the back-lines are marked inside the field with their centres in line with the centres of the back-lines; the distance from the outside edges of these 3.00 metres lines to the outside edges of the back-lines is 9.00 metres

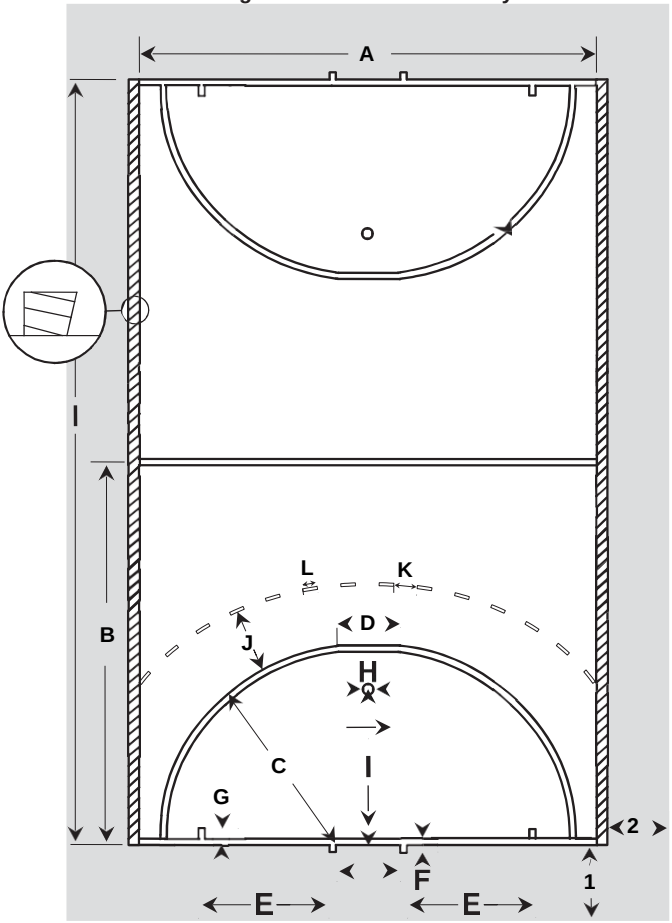
b these lines are continued in uninterrupted arcs in both directions to meet the back-lines in the form of quarter-circles with centres at the inside front corner of the nearer goal-posts

c the 3.00 metres line and the arcs are called the circle-lines; the spaces enclosed by these lines, including the lines themselves, are called the circles

d broken lines are marked with their outer edges 3 metres from the outer edge of each circle-line; each broken line starts with a solid section at the top centre of the circle- line and each solid section is 300 mm long with gaps between the solid sections 2 metres long

These broken lines are only recommended for international matches because it is recognised that many sports halls already have a profusion of markings. Their adoption for other matches is at the discretion of National Associations and Continental Federations.

Figure 1: Indoor Field of Play



Indoor Field Dimensions

Code	Metres	Code	Metres
A	22.00 (minimum 18.00)	H	0.10
B	22.00 (minimum 18.00)	I	7.00
C	9.00	J	3.00
D	3.00	K	2.00
E*	6.03	L	0.30
F	0.15	1	minimum 3.00
G	0.30	2	minimum 1.00

** Dimension E is measured from the goal-post line and not from the goal-post itself; the dimension from the goal-post is 6.00 metres.*

1.6 Goals:

a two vertical goal-posts joined by a horizontal cross-bar are placed at the centre of each back-line on the external marks

b the goal-posts and cross-bar are white, rectangular in cross section, 80 mm wide and 80 mm deep

c the goal-posts must not extend vertically beyond the cross-bar and the cross-bar must not extend horizontally beyond the goal-posts

d the distance between the inner edges of the goal-posts is 3.00 metres and the distance from the lower edge of the cross-bar to the ground is 2.00 metres

e the space outside the field, behind but including the goal-posts and cross-bar and enclosed by the net is a minimum of 800 mm deep at the cross-bar and a

minimum of 1.00 metres deep at ground-level.

Goal side-boards and back-boards are not mandatory but if fitted should conform to the following specification:

a side-boards are minimum 0.92 metres long and 460 mm high

b back-boards are 3.00 metres long and 460 mm high

c side-boards are positioned on the ground at right angles to the back-line and are fixed to the back of the goal-posts without increasing their width

d back-boards are positioned on the ground at right angles to the goal side-boards and parallel to the back-line, and are fixed to the end of the goal side-boards

e side-boards and back-boards are of a dark colour on the inside.

1.7 Nets:

a the maximum mesh size is 45 mm

b attachment to the back of the goal-posts and cross-bar is at intervals of not more than 150 mm

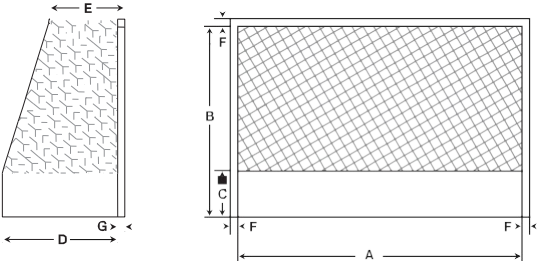
c the nets hang outside the goal side-boards and back-board if fitted

d the nets are secured so as to prevent the ball passing between the net and the goal-posts, cross-bar, side-boards and back-boards if fitted

e the nets are fitted loosely to prevent the ball

rebounding.

Figure 2: Goal



Goal Dimensions

Code	Metres	Code	Metres
A	3.00	E	minimum 0.80
B	2.00	F	0.080
C	0.46	G	0.080
D	minimum 1.00		

1.8 Benches and table:

a a bench for each team is placed outside and along one side of the field

b a table for timekeeping may be placed outside and, preferably, at the centre of the field on the same side as and between the team benches.

The position of the benches and table must not be dangerous to players or umpires.

2 Stick

All measurements are made and other specifications assessed with any coverings or additional fixings attached to the stick (that is, with the stick in the form in which it is used on the field).

2.1 This section specifies the properties of the stick. Properties outside the specifications are not permitted. Although the properties are described as explicitly as possible, the FIH reserves the right to prohibit any stick which, in the opinion of the FIH Rules Committee, is unsafe or likely to have a detrimental impact on playing the game.

Figure 3: The stick

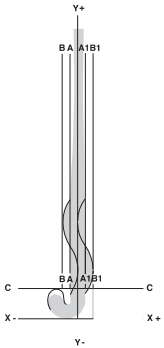
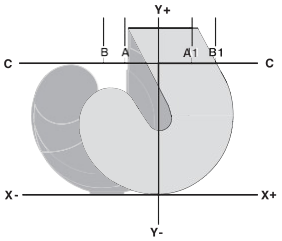


Figure 4: The Head of the stick



2.2 The shape and dimensions of the stick are tested by placing the stick playing side downwards on a flat surface marked with the lines shown in figures 3 and 4. Lines A, A1, B, B1 and Y are parallel and are perpendicular to lines C and X. The dimensions in figures 3 and 4 are:

line A to line A1	51 mm
line A to line B	20 mm
line A1 to line B1	20 mm
line A to line Y	25.5 mm
line C to line X	100 mm

2.3 The stick has a traditional shape, consisting of the handle and the head:

a the stick is positioned in figures 3 and 4 so that the line Y passes through the centre of the top of the handle; the handle of the stick starts at line C and continues in the direction Y+.

b the base of the head of the stick is positioned touching line X; the head of the stick starts at line X and terminates at line C.

2.4 The stick is assessed with any covering, coating or fixing belonging to the stick.

2.5 In any of the specifications below, the following definitions apply:

a “smooth” means without any rough or sharp parts. The surface must be even and regular, free from perceptible projections or indentations and not rough, wrinkled, pitted, grooved or scored. No edge shall have an angle with radius smaller than 3 mm.

b “flat” means without any curved, high or hollow parts having a radius smaller than 2 m, transforming smoothly to an edge with a radius not smaller than 3 mm.

c "continuous" means all along the defined subject without interruption.

2.6 The playing side of the stick is the entire side shown in figures 3 and 4 and the edges of that side.

2.7 The transition from handle to head must be smooth and continuous without any unevenness or other discontinuity.

2.8 The head must be a 'J' or 'U' shape the upturned or open end of which is limited by the line C.

2.9 The head is not limited between lines C and X in the direction X- or X+.

2.10 The head must be flat on the left-hand side only (the side which is to the player's left when the stick is held with the open end of the head pointing directly away from the player's front, i.e. the side shown in the diagrams).

2.11 A single convex or concave deviation with a smooth continuous profile and of maximum 4 mm at any point is permitted across the otherwise flat playing side of the head of the stick and any continuation of it along the handle.

Deviation is tested by placing a straight edge of length 53mm across the stick at any point along the playing side and using a standard pointed depth gauge; the device used to measure bow or rake and shown in figure 6 can also be used for this purpose. The depth of concave curvature below the straight edge must not exceed 4 mm. Other indentations or grooves are not permitted on the playing side of the stick.

2.12 The flat playing side of the head of the stick and any continuation of it along the handle must be smooth.

2.13 A twist or twists along the flat playing side of the stick from the head and any continuation of it along the handle are not

permitted; i.e. the intersection of the plane comprising the flat playing side of the stick with any plane comprising all or part of the flat side of the handle must remain parallel to line C-C.

2.14 It is permitted for the handle to be bent or curved to protrude beyond the line A once only to the limiting line B at maximum or but not also to be bent or curved to protrude beyond the line A1 once only to the limiting line B1 at maximum.

2.15 Any curvature along the length of the stick (the bow or rake) must have a continuous smooth profile along the whole length, must occur along the playing side or the back of the stick but not both and is limited to a depth of 25 mm. The point of maximum bow must not be closer to the base of the head (line X in figure 3) than 200mm. Multiple curves are not permitted.

The stick is laid playing side downwards on a flat surface in its natural resting position as shown in figure 5. The device shown in figure 6 is used to measure the bow or rake and is placed with its base on the testing surface. The 25mm high end of the device must not pass freely more than 8mm under the stick at any point; i.e. this end of the device must not pass freely under the stick to the extent that the edge of the stick touches the remaining part of the device.

Figure 5: Maximum bow measurement

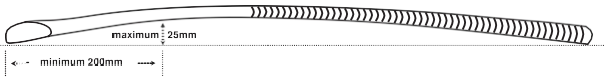
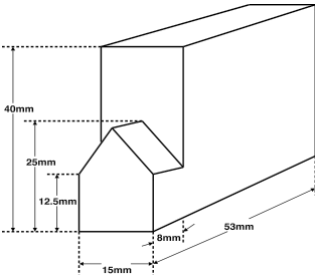


Figure 6: Device for measuring stick bow or rake



2.16 The edges and the non-playing side (back) of the stick must be rounded and must have a continuous smooth profile. Flat sections along the edges or back of the stick are not permitted.

Smooth and shallow undulations or indentations on the back of the handle are permitted to a maximum depth of 4 mm. No undulations or indentations are permitted on the back of the head of the stick.

2.17 Inclusive of any additional coverings used, the stick must pass through a ring with an interior diameter of 51 mm.

2.18 The total weight of the stick must not exceed 737 grams. The length of the stick as measured from the top of the handle to the bottom of the head of the stick (line X in Figure 3) shall not be more than 105 cm.

2.19 Ball speed must not be greater than 98% of stick head speed under test conditions.

Ball speed is determined over a series of 5 tests at a stick speed of 80 km/hour in the simulator of an FIH approved laboratory. Ball speed is

calculated from the time the ball passes two measuring points and is expressed as a ratio to the specified stick speed. FIH approved hockey balls are used. The test is carried out at prevailing laboratory conditions with a temperature of approximately 20°C and relative humidity of approximately 50 %.

2.20 The entire stick must be smooth.

Any stick which poses a potential risk for players is prohibited.

2.21 The stick and possible additions may be made of or contain any material other than metal or metallic components provided it is fit for the purpose of playing hockey and is not hazardous.

2.22 The application of tapes and resins is permitted provided that they are not hazardous and that the stick conforms to the specifications.

3 Ball

3.1 The ball:

a is spherical

b has a circumference of between 224 mm and 235 mm

c weighs between 156 grams and 163 grams

d is made of any material and coloured white (or an agreed colour which contrasts with the playing surface)

e is hard with a smooth surface but indentations are permitted.

4 Goalkeeper's equipment

4.1 Hand protectors:

a each have a maximum width of 228 mm and maximum length of 365 mm when laid flat, palm upwards

b must not have any additions to retain the stick when the stick is not held in the hand.

4.2 Leg guards: each have a maximum width of 300mm when on the leg of the goalkeeper.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE

The International Hockey Federation can provide information on various topics to assist participation in the sport which can be found on the FIH website www.fih.hockey

or from the FIH Office:

The International Hockey Federation
Rue du Valentin 61
1004 Lausanne, Switzerland
Tel.:+41 21 641 0606
Email: info@fih.hockey

Copyright © FIH 2026

The Copyright of these Rules is held by the International Hockey Federation. The contents may be reproduced or translated for distribution or resale by affiliated National Associations. Reprints must replicate the appearance of these Rules and incorporate the following text: “Reprinted with permission of the International Hockey Federation”. National Associations seeking guidance on the reprinting of this Book must contact the FIH Office.



International Hockey Federation
Rue du Valentin 61
CH-1004 Lausanne, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 21 641 0606
Email: info@fih.hockey