

VIDEO UMPIRE PROTOCOL

Updated July 2026

The primary purpose of the Video Umpire Referral system is to assist umpires in their decision making and to help reduce major errors which could materially impact upon the result of a match.

The Video Umpire will utilise existing TV camera coverage. The Video Umpire will be located in a private room. High resolution TV monitors will be used for reviewing incidents and replays.

Changes to recent previous versions of the VU Protocol are indicated in red text.

1 POWER TO REFER DECISIONS TO THE VIDEO UMPIRE

- 1.1 The On Field Umpires are the only persons who can refer decisions to the Video Umpire either directly or after a request from a team;
- 1.2 Referrals cannot be made as a result of protests, queries or pressure from players, Team Managers or Coaches on any decision. Teams (and their captains) will be held responsible for any violation or abuse of the Video Umpire protocols;
- 1.3 No one other than the On Field Umpires can stop the match to request a referral; eg the Video Umpire or Technical Officials at the Technical Table cannot stop a match.

2 UMPIRE REFERRAL

- 2.1 The On Field Umpires may refer decisions to the Video Umpire when they are not convinced that they have taken, or are able to take, the correct decision relating to the awarding or disallowing of goals; or the award / non-award of penalty stroke decisions.
 - a the awarding / disallowing of goals;
 - b or the award / non-award of Penalty Strokes; or
 - c Serious misconduct incidents anywhere on the field of play
- 2.2 Referrals shall only relate to whether or not a goal has been legally scored or if a Penalty Stroke has been correctly awarded or not awarded, or if Serious Misconduct has or has not occurred.
- 2.3 The On Field Umpires are therefore entitled to request the Video Umpire to assist in making decisions which include, but are not restricted to:
 - a whether the ball crossed the goal line (within the area bounded by the goal posts and crossbar);
 - b whether the ball was legally played or touched inside the circle by the stick of an attacker and did not travel outside the circle before passing completely over the goal-line and

- under the cross-bar;
- c whether the ball travelled outside the circle before it entered the goal either from a shot by an attacker during the taking of a penalty corner;
 - d whether a breach of the Rules has been observed within the attacking 23 metre area in the play leading to the awarding or disallowing of a goal. It is then for the On Field Umpire to take any breach into account in reaching their decision.
 - e whether an offence has been committed by a defender in the circle which prevents the probable scoring of a goal, or there has been 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.
 - f whether any Serious Misconduct has been committed, on or off the ball, anywhere on the field of play.

"Serious Misconduct" refers to serious breaches of the Rules of Hockey or the FIH Code of Conduct which may justify the award of:

a red card; or

a yellow card with a suspension time of 10 minutes.

- (a) *any conduct which may be considered to be a Level 2 or Level 3 offence under the FIH Code of Conduct should be penalized with a red card*

Level 2 offences:

- *Using language or gesture(s) that is seriously obscene, seriously offensive or have a seriously insulting nature to another Participant or any other third person.*
- *Intimidation of an Umpire or other third person whether by language or conduct (including gestures).*
- *Threat of assault or physical assault (without injury) on a Participant or any other third person.*

Level 3 offences:

- *Threat of assault or physical assault (without injury) on an Umpire or Technical Official*
- *Physical assault of another Participant or any other person (including a spectator) = intentional or reckless physical contact with a Participant or any other person, whether by using fists, feet or equipment (including but not limited to a hockey stick or hockey ball).*
- *Any act of violence on or off the field of play during a match = includes the causing of deliberate physical harm to any person like kicking, punching or fighting.*
- *Spitting towards another participant*

or

- (b) *any serious and/or physical offence as referred to in the Rules of Hockey like dangerous, reckless or careless fouls (including sliding tackle) should be penalized with a yellow card (10 minutes suspension time)*

For the avoidance of doubt, (a) and (b) above can be read jointly or separately.

- 2.4 The On Field Umpire requests Video Umpire assistance using the "television-screen" signal; he / she relays by radio to the Video Umpire whatever information is necessary.

3 UMPIRE REFERRAL PROCESS

If possible, the engaged Umpire signals the decision they consider to be correct.

Play and time should be stopped before referring to the Video Umpire.

The Match Umpire requests Video Umpire assistance using the “television-screen” signal followed by a hand on chest signal to denote an umpire referral; she/he relays by radio to the Video Umpire all information necessary including the decision they made.

The Video Umpire confirms that the request has been received and understood.

At an Umpire Referral, no players may either approach or remain close to the Umpires. If any players interfere with the referral process, this will be considered as ‘crowding’ with the offending players liable to green card personal penalties. Repeat offences may result in yellow card personal penalties.

- 3.1 The Video Umpire calls for as many replays from any camera angle as necessary to reach a decision.

If the Video Umpire determines within the required timeframe (preferably 60-90 seconds) that the Match Umpire’s decision is correct, they should state, “There is no clear reason to change your decision,” and then confirm how play will be re-started.

- 3.2 Within the shortest time frame possible, the Video Umpire provides her / his advice and recommendation using the phrase “I have advice for you” when communicating with the On Field Umpire:

If the Video Umpire is able to provide advice within the required timeframe (preferably 60-90 seconds), they should initiate communication with the On Field Umpire by stating, “I have advice for you,” and then proceed with the appropriate phrase from the list below:

- Goal
- No Goal
- Penalty Stroke
- No Penalty Stroke

If a Penalty Stroke and a personal penalty have been awarded and the referral outcome is no Penalty Stroke, the Video Umpire should also advise whether the personal penalty should be revoked or remains appropriate.

If the referral outcome is a Penalty Corner rather than a Penalty Stroke, this should also be included in the advice.

- Serious Misconduct - the Video Umpire advice may include whether a temporary – **yellow card (10 minutes suspension time)** – or permanent – **red card** – suspension should be awarded.

If during the review of the replays it is observed that, immediately before or after the incident which led to the Serious Misconduct referral, a major breach of the rules occurred, the Video Umpire will additionally advise the Match Umpire accordingly, with the recommendation for the appropriate re-start. Minor observed infringements should not

be corrected.

- No Serious Misconduct
- No Advice Possible
- plus, advice on any observed breach of the Rules, *including advice on any appropriate personal penalty in the context of goal or Penalty Stroke referral.*

These are the only possible outcomes of Umpire Referrals.

- 3.3 If a breach of the Rules is observed and advised to the On Field Umpire, it is then for the On Field Umpire to take into account the breach in reaching her / his final decision.
- 3.4 In the case of 'No Advice Possible' (eg if the video footage is inconclusive, including through not having the correct replays available, the ball never being in shot in the replays, the footage being of insufficient quality to permit a decision, *not being able to provide advice within the time frame* or technical problems with the referral equipment) the original decision of the On field Umpire stands. If there was no decision given before the referral, then the final decision is 'No Goal', 'No Penalty Stroke' or no 'Serious Misconduct' (depending on the type of referral) *and play should be re-started according to the situation before the VU process began.*

If there are enough angles provided, but the Video Umpire remains uncertain, "No advice possible" should not be used. In such cases the On Field Umpire's decision stands and there is "no clear reason to change your decision".

- 3.5 An umpire referral that has already been adjudicated upon may not be the subject of a subsequent team referral.

In general, for an Umpire Referral, the Video Umpire will provide the Match Umpires with information as follows:

- *"There is no clear reason to change your decision" – the On Field Umpire decision stands and the Video Umpire confirms how play should be re-started.*
- *"I have advice for you" – advice and a recommendation regarding the decision, including how play should be re-started.*
- *"There is no advice possible" – the On Field Umpire's decision stands and the Video Umpire confirms how play should be re-started*

The On Field Umpire should repeat back the Video Umpire's advice and recommendation, if necessary, to ensure that it has been correctly heard and understood.

4 TEAM REFERRAL

- 4.1 Each team is allowed one team referral request (which must be made through the On Field Umpires) during regulation time in any match subject to articles 5.4a and 5.4b below of this Regulation and one team referral request during a shoot-out competition, subject to articles 5.4a and 5.4b below:

Referrals remaining from regular time are not carried over into the shoot-out competition.

Team Referrals are restricted to decisions within the 23 metres area relating to the award (or non-award) of: Goals, Penalty Strokes or Penalty Corners.

Teams may NOT ask for a referral outside of the 23m areas.

*During a Shoot-out competition, **team referrals are restricted to** decisions relating to the award (or non-award) of Goals, Penalty Strokes and Shoot-out re-takes.*

- a team referrals will be restricted to decisions within the 23 metre areas relating to the award (or non-award) of goals, penalty strokes and penalty corners and, during a shoot-out competition, whether a shoot-out should be re-taken. The award of personal penalty cards may not be the subject of a team referral;
- b any team player, on the field of play at the time of the incident, can request a team referral;
- c this player must indicate to an On Field Umpire that he / she wishes to use their team referral. He / she must do so **immediately (not more than 5-7 seconds)** after the incident or decision which is to be referred by using the 'T' signal as well as confirming this verbally to the Umpire;
- d the On Field Umpires will not disallow any request for a team referral provided the 'T' signal has been used by a player and seen by the umpire;

Umpires should not engage in any discussions as to the merits of referring, in order not to be perceived as trying to talk players out of making a referral.

Once the 'T' signal has been received, no player other than the one making the referral (with the possible exception of one further player to assist with the question for language difficulties only) may either approach or remain close to the Umpires. If any other players interfere with the referral process, this will be considered as 'crowding' with the offending players liable to green card personal penalties. Repeat offences may result in yellow card personal penalties.

Once the 'T' signal has been received, the referral must be carried out. Teams cannot change their mind, after consulting each other or coaches.

If a team abuses the Video Umpire referral system by taking a team referral solely to stop a counter-attack, that team loses its right to refer and the captain must be awarded a yellow card (5 minutes suspension time).

- e the player requesting the team referral must inform an On Field Umpire of the exact nature of the decision (or non-decision) that their team wishes to be reviewed within a maximum of 20 seconds;
- f if no question is received within 20 seconds, the team referral will automatically default to a review of the last decision or non-decision relating to the award (or non-award) of a goal, penalty stroke, penalty corner or re-take of a shoot-out;
- g the On Field Umpire then requests Video Umpire assistance using the "television-screen" signal, followed by a 'T' signal to denote a team referral; he / she relays by radio to the Video Umpire whatever information is necessary.

5 TEAM REFERRAL PROCESS

The On Field Umpire requests Video Umpire assistance using the "television-screen" signal, followed

by a “T” signal to denote a team referral; she/he relays by radio to the Video Umpire which team is referring, what their question is and which decision has been given by the Match Umpire, plus any additional necessary information like advantage.

The remainder of the starting process remains the same as for Umpire Referrals (see above).

- 5.1 The Video Umpire calls for as many replays from any camera angle as necessary to reach a decision.

If the Video Umpire determines within the required timeframe (preferably 60-90 seconds) that the Match Umpire’s decision is correct, they should state, “There is no clear reason to change your decision”, confirm how play will be re-started and that the requesting team loses their right to refer.

- 5.2 Within the shortest time frame possible, the Video Umpire provides her / his advice and recommendation using the phrase “I have advice for you” when communicating with the On Field Umpire:

If the Video Umpire is able to provide advice within the required timeframe (preferably 60-90 seconds), they should initiate communication with the Match Umpire by stating, “I have advice for you”, and then proceed with the appropriate phrase from the list below and confirm the requesting team keeps their right to refer

- Goal
- No Goal
- Penalty Stroke
- No Penalty Stroke
- Penalty Corner
- No Penalty Corner
- Shoot-out to be re-taken
- No shoot-out re-take
- No Advice Possible
- plus advice on any observed breach of the Rules, *including advice on any appropriate personal penalty in the context of Goal, Penalty Corner or Penalty Stroke referral.*

These are the only possible outcomes of Team Referrals.

If a Team Referral is in respect of whether a defender crossed the back-line or goal-line before permitted at a penalty corner, then the Video Umpire should advise whether the penalty corner should be taken again AND advise whether the re-taken penalty corner must be defended with one fewer player or not.

If a Team Referral is in respect of whether an attacker entered the circle before permitted at a penalty corner, then the Video Umpire should advise whether the penalty corner should be taken again AND advise whether the re-taken penalty corner must be injected by a different player

If, during open play in the circle, a Penalty Corner is awarded which the defending team refer, and the decision is found in their favour that there was no breach of the Rules by the defending team, they

will keep their referral and a bully will be the re-start. The bully will be taken *close to the location of the ball when play was stopped but not within 15 metres of the back-line and not within 5 metres of the circle.*

If play is stopped **during a Penalty Corner** because of a decision by the Match Umpire before the Penalty Corner has been completed, then in accordance with Rule 6.5 of the Rules of Hockey, if the Video Umpire advises that play has been stopped without any valid reason and the Penalty Corner was not completed, then the Penalty Corner should be re-taken. This includes when an umpire has awarded a re-take of a Penalty Corner without any valid reason (e.g., umpire awards a re-taken Penalty Corner because of a defender's foot, however the ball hit only the player's stick). Therefore, if play is stopped and a re-taken Penalty Corner is awarded, **the defending team *should only refer the decision if they believe there was a breach of the Rules by the attacking team.*** If they are correct, a free hit to the defence can be awarded and they keep their referral. However, if there was **no breach of the Rules by either team**, then **the Penalty Corner will be re-taken** but the **defending team will not lose their referral**, as there was no breach of the Rules by them. *In these situations, the Video Umpire should promptly advise the Match Umpire that the Penalty Corner must be re-taken.*

The Match Umpire should clearly inform the Video Umpire where the ball was when play was stopped to determine whether the Penalty Corner had been completed at that time. If the Penalty Corner had been completed when play was stopped, this must be taken into account when determining the correct re-start.

If a Team Referral was made by the attacking team either against the decision of the Match Umpire, or that causes play to be stopped before the Penalty Corner has been completed, and the referral decision is in their favour, then the match will restart with a Penalty Corner and the attacking team will retain their referral. However, if the referral decision is not in their favour, then a free hit to the defence will be awarded and the attacking team will lose their referral.

If a Team Referral is made by the attacking team following the award of a Penalty Corner and the request to upgrade the decision to a Penalty Stroke is denied while the Penalty Corner is confirmed, the decision of the On Field Umpire stands and the attacking team will lose their referral, since the decision is not in their favour.

- 5.3 If a breach of the Rules is observed and advised to the On Field Umpire, it is then for the On Field Umpire to take into account the breach in reaching her / his final decision.

*If during reviewing the replays it is observed that, immediately before the incident which led to the referral, the ball travels over the backline or side-line **within the attacking 23m area** (and no prior breach of the Rules is observed), the Video Umpire will advise the Match Umpire accordingly, with the recommendation for the appropriate re-start. On this basis, the referring team do not lose their right to refer, since the ball was out of play prior to them attempting to refer the subsequent incident.*

*If during reviewing the replays it is observed that, immediately before the incident which led to the referral, there is a breach of the Rules **within the attacking 23m area**, the Video Umpire will advise the Match Umpire accordingly, with the recommendation for the appropriate re-start. On this basis, the referring team do not lose their right to refer, since the breach occurred prior to them referring the subsequent incident.*

- 5.4 Implications for the retention or loss of team referral rights:

- a in the event that the referral is upheld the referring team retains its right of referral;

*In the event that the Video Umpire decision results in an outcome that is **more favourable to the team asking for the referral than the original decision** the referring team retains its right to refer.*

The attacking team will retain their right to refer if:

- A referred no decision and play on situation results in a Penalty Corner, Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A referred free hit decision for an intentional offence in the 23m results in a Penalty Corner
- A referred Penalty Corner decision results in a Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A referred Penalty Stroke decision results in a Goal
- A referred Shoot-out results in a Shoot-out re-take, Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A referred Shoot-out Penalty Stroke results in a Goal

The defending team will retain their right to refer if:

- A referred Penalty Corner decision results in a corner, free hit, 15m hit/bully or sideline ball
- A referred Penalty Stroke decision results in a Penalty Corner, corner, free hit, 15m hit or sideline ball
- A referred Penalty Corner that is re-awarded with the defence not having to defend it with one fewer player
- A referred Goal decision results in a Penalty Stroke, Penalty Corner, corner, free hit, 15m hit or sideline ball
- A referred Shoot-out decision referral results in no Shoot-out re-take or a defensive free hit
- A referred Shoot-out Penalty Stroke decision results in a Shoot-out re-take, no Shoot-out re-take or a defensive free hit
- A referred Shoot-out Goal decision results in a Penalty Stroke, Shoot-out re-take, no Shoot-out re-take or a defensive free hit

- b in the event of 'No Advice Possible' (eg if the video footage is inconclusive, including through not having the correct replays available, the ball never being in shot in the replays, the footage being of insufficient quality to permit a decision, *not being able to provide advice within the time frame* or technical problems with the referral equipment), the referring team retains its right of referral;

If there are enough angles provided, but Video Umpire remains uncertain, "No advice possible" should not be used. In such cases the Match Umpire's decision stands and there is "no clear reason to change your decision".

- c if there is no clear reason to change the On Field Umpire's original decision, the referring team loses its right of referral.

The attacking team will lose their right to refer if:

- A referred no decision and play on situation does not result in a Penalty Corner, Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A referred free hit decision for an intentional offence in the 23m does not result in a Penalty Corner
- A referred Penalty Corner decision is unchanged or does not result in a Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A referred Penalty Stroke decision is unchanged or does not result in a Goal

- A referred Shoot-out re-take decision is unchanged or does not result in a Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A referred Shoot-out Penalty Stroke is unchanged or does not result in a Goal
- A referral is for a non-referrable reason

The defending team will lose their right to refer if:

- A referred Penalty Corner decision is unchanged or upgraded to a Penalty Stroke or Goal (including any additional breach seen, even if their original question is correct)
- A Penalty Corner is re-awarded with the defence having to defend it with one fewer player
- A referred Penalty Stroke decision is unchanged or upgraded to a Goal (including any additional breach seen, even if their original question is correct)
- A referred Goal decision is unchanged
- A referred Shoot-out re-take decision is unchanged or upgraded to a Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A referred Shoot-out Penalty Stroke decision is unchanged or upgraded to a Goal
- A referred Shoot-out Goal decision is unchanged
- A referral is for a non-referrable reason

If the Match Umpire does not agree with the advice given by the Video Umpire and chooses to maintain their original decision, the referring team retains its right to refer.

- 5.5 A team referral that has already been adjudicated upon may not be the subject of a subsequent referral by the opposing team.

In general, for a Team Referral, the Video Umpire will provide the Match Umpires with information as follows:

- *advice and recommendation regarding the decision*
- *indicate how the play should be re-started*
- *update the Team Referral status in the light of the decision; in the event of No Advice Possible, this will be communicated by the Match Umpires to the teams on the field of play via the referring player / team captain as appropriate.*

The Match Umpire should repeat back the Video Umpire's advice and recommendation, if necessary, to ensure that it has been correctly heard and understood.

As specified in the Tournament Regulations, it is emphasised that no protest may be made to or considered by the Technical Delegate from a decision of an Umpire or Video Umpire during a match or Shoot-out competition.

6 FOR UMPIRE AND TEAM REFERRALS

- 6.1 The final decision, including any matter of interpretation, remains with the On Field Umpire and not the Video Umpire.
- 6.2 All other decisions remain with the On Field Umpires.
- 6.3 Substitutions may not take place during the stoppage of play for a video referral; substitution may take place on the resumption of play subject to the Rules of Hockey.

The aim is to correct major mistakes.

Minor infringements with no significant advantage are therefore non-referrable. Non-referrable situations are:

- *for team referrals: any situation outside the 23 metres area*
- *the award of personal penalties*
- *the Penalty Corner injector's foot not being completely outside the field of play.*
- *at a Penalty Corner, the feet or the sticks of attacking and defending players not being completely outside the circle or behind the goal-line.*
- *at a Penalty Corner, defenders do not wear (mandatory) protective equipment or wear protective equipment incorrectly*
- *the ball not being exactly on the side-line or back-line to re-start play.*
- *the ball not being exactly on the right spot at a free hit.*
- *second ball on the field of play with no influence on play*
- *players being within 5 metres of an attacking free hit in the 23 metres area and who are not playing or attempting to play the ball or influencing play.*
- *an incorrectly awarded free hit or side-line ball prior to the play leading to the award of a Goal, Penalty Stroke or Penalty Corner*

Referrals will also not be accepted where a team has been asked whether it wishes to refer, has confirmed that it does not wish to do so, and then changes its mind and/or attempts to refer once replays have been shown on the stadium public screen.

In general, referrals involving matters of interpretation are less likely to be successful; teams may still refer but must understand that they risk losing their right to refer.

If a team requests a referral in relation to any of the points above, it automatically loses its right of referral, and the incident will not be reviewed.

DEFINITION

In this Appendix "Serious Misconduct" refers to;

- (a) any conduct which may be considered to be a Level 2 or Level 3 offence under the FIH Code of Conduct; or
- (b) any serious and/or physical offence as referred to in the Rules of Hockey; or
- (c) when a player intentionally misbehaves in a serious manner as referred to in the Rules of Hockey

For the avoidance of doubt, (a), (b) and (c) above can be read jointly or separately.