

TECHNICAL OFFICIATING

Guidance Note 1 - Your First Tournament



Your First Tournament Appointment

This guidance note is designed to give you information and advice on how to prepare for, and what to expect, at your first EH Tournament appointment.

Tournaments are great events for meeting others from the hockey family and are usually held over a weekend, although some may last 3-5 days. If you are appointed to an EH tournament, it gives you the opportunity to work as part of a team of officials and you will be expected to be present for the duration of the event, and stay away from home if you live a long way from the venue.

The Officials

The Tournament Director (TD) is in overall charge of the officials' team which will be made up of one or more Technical Officers (TO) plus a number of Judges. There will also be a team of umpires who will be led by an Umpire Manager and sometimes an Umpire Coach will also be present.

There will usually be 3 officials at the technical table for each game, although sometimes only 2 will be present. There will be a TO in charge of the match, a judge to operate the timing device (and scoreboard if present), and another judge to complete the match report form, either manually or using the EH online Tournament Management System (AltiusRT/TMS).

Every effort will be made to give you the same number of games as the other officials and during this time you will witness different styles of officiating, giving you the chance to learn best practice from the more experienced officials and start to develop your own style. Teamwork, flexibility and co-operation will be key, but there should also be the opportunity for interaction, education and above all, enjoyment.

The Tournament

Tournament days can be long so you need to manage your time carefully and what you do between games is up to you. There is usually a rest area where you can relax, and this is often shared with the TD and umpires. This means there could be people doing administration, having debriefings, resting between games or having a chat that you could join in with. Alternatively you can of course watch games that you are not appointed to, or you could take yourself away from the action completely and just relax. Whatever you do between appointed games, make sure you are properly prepared and arrive punctually for your next game.

Your schedule may mean that you don't eat midday meals at the normal time and evening meals are often taken quite late, so make sure you have snacks to bridge the gaps. It is also important to keep hydrated, so you may want to take drinks as well. There will often be the opportunity to buy food and drink on site, but check the arrangements before travelling.

If at any time during the tournament, you are taken ill, or anything happens to prevent you carrying out your duties, inform someone as soon as possible, preferably the TD, or one of the TOs so that you can be taken care of and alternative arrangements made. Don't suffer in silence!

Preparations for the Tournament

- Ensure your availability is kept up to date on the NPUA website. If your availability changes for any reason, remember to login and change it online.
- Your appointment will be communicated via an email from NPUA - check the dates and ensure that you are still available. If not, inform the Technical Appointment Assistant (TAA) as soon as possible.
- Nearer the event you will receive information by email from the England Hockey Competitions Department (EHCD) giving general information about the tournament together with details of the venue and accommodation.
- If the tournament is using TMS, you will also receive an email from EH with confirmation of your appointment and your login details.

Travel and Accommodation

- Check your travel time to establish whether you qualify for overnight accommodation, and if so, for how many nights. Normally this would be:
 - 30 mins or less travel - no accommodation provided;
 - 30-90 mins travel - arrive at the venue on the first day of play then accommodation is provided for the remaining nights;
 - over 90 mins travel - arrive at the hotel the evening before the tournament begins, and accommodation is provided for the duration, although not on the last evening unless there is a very late finish.

However, in some cases there might be briefing meetings the evening before the tournament, in which case you would be required to attend and stay (unless you live within 30 mins drive).

- Always allow plenty of time for your travel to the tournament venue (or hotel), especially if using public transport or travelling at peak times. If there are any problems during your journey, keep your TD informed when it is safe to do so.
- If staying overnight, note that twin rooms are the norm. If you need a single room, you will normally be charged the single supplement for your room plus one for a colleague who you could have shared with. If you have a valid medical reason for requesting a single room be sure to advise EH Competitions Department or your TD well in advance of the tournament.
- Ensure you advise your TD of your accommodation requirements by the stipulated date.

Tournament Documents, Technical Kit and Clothing

- Your TD will normally send the tournament regulations to you along with any briefings notes specific to your tournament. The latter will include important points in the regulations, specific items of administration at your venue and details relating to your role in the tournament. You should study all of these documents as they vary from one event to another.
- You will need these documents at the tournament, so transfer them to a device that you will have with you, or print them off and bring with you.
- Ensure you are up to date with the current FIH Rules of Hockey (available from www.fih.ch).
- If TMS is being used, you will receive User Notes from EHCD and also details of the online training module, which you should take time to complete in advance of the tournament. If you have any problems with this make sure you contact your TD who will be able to assist you.
- You should prepare your officiating kit: - Rules of Hockey (Indoor or Outdoor), stick ring (and cathedral if you have one), stopwatch(es), tape measure, pencils and pens, scissors, string, tape, notepad, clipboard etc.
- Prepare the correct clothing for the tournament (check the weather forecast). Officials should wear EH Technical Officials' navy shirts, navy fleece, dark trousers/skirts (black or navy) and

dark shoes which are suitable for the venue. If you don't have EH Technical Officials' branded clothing, please wear items as close in colour to the above as possible.

- Ensure that you have all contact details for key personnel before you travel, just in case you are delayed.

At the Tournament Venue

- On arrival find your colleagues and introduce yourself.
- If necessary make yourself available to help with various aspects of the venue set up - clock, laptop, printer, ice box and ice, checking goal nets, bench areas etc.
- Find out when and where any briefing will take place and ensure that you are there on time with all of the appropriate information you were sent by email. As a judge, you won't be expected to make any major decisions, but use this time to listen and learn. Ensure you comply with any directives given at the briefing as it is important that there is consistency during the tournament.
- Check the times of the games to which you have been appointed. If the TMS system is being used, you will find the information on there, together with other match details. Take note of who the TO is as they will be the person in charge of that game.
- Ensure you are familiar with the operation of the clock and the laptop (if appropriate) - ask for assistance if you are unsure, or seek an opportunity to shadow a colleague before your game.
- Before their first game, the sticks, GK equipment and penalty corner protection of each team may have to be checked. Liaise with your colleagues and assist with this task when required.

During Your Game

- Report to your TO at the technical table at the agreed time before your game.
- Take turns in operating the clock or completing the paperwork/running TMS. Concentrate on the game and your role in it alone - do not get distracted. If you are on the clock, make sure you run a stop watch in case of clock failure, and always indicate to the umpires that time is stopped. If you are operating TMS, fill in a paper copy in case of wi-fi or laptop failure.
- Make sure that there is always someone watching the game. If you have to look down for any reason, inform your colleague and let them know when your eyes are back on the game.
- It is the TOs job to deal with benches, substitutions and suspensions, so don't involve yourself with those unless specifically asked by the TO.
- If there is an issue in the game that may lead to further disciplinary action, make quick notes of what you have seen in case you are asked for information afterwards by the TO or TD.
- At the end of the game and after signing the match report form, ask the TO's permission to leave - don't just assume you can go, as there might be discussions or issues to resolve.
- It is important that you don't discuss the actions of other officials and umpires. Always be supportive of your colleagues, even if things have not gone smoothly. However, if there is a serious issue which you feel you must report, arrange to speak to your TD in private.

Overnight Stay

- After the first day, there will probably be a short meeting in the hotel to appraise the day, so find out when and where this will be held and ensure you arrive punctually.
- If you are appointed to a youth (U16 or U18) tournament and you are staying in the same hotel as the teams, drinking alcohol in the hotel will probably not be allowed. If in doubt, check with your TD.
- Establish what is planned for the evening meal and arrive punctually if there is a specific meeting time. You will be expected to pay for your evening meals, so if you have any concerns about this, please discuss with the TD in advance.

- Be aware of meal plans for the weekend and advise of any special dietary needs. You will be able to claim a small allowance for meals - £2 for lunch and £5 for dinner.
- Establish the times of breakfast and checkout, and ensure that you allow enough time to pack and get to the tournament venue.
- EH cover the cost of bed and breakfast, so if you charge anything else to your room, you must settle the bill yourself before leaving.
- If you are not appointed to the first game the following day, it is usually acceptable to arrive at the venue in time for your game rather than at the beginning of the day, but make sure you check this with the TD first.

After the Tournament

- You will normally be expected to stay until the end of the tournament, even if you are not appointed on the last game. However, if you have a long distance to travel, you may ask the TD if you are able to leave early.
- Before you leave the tournament venue, the TD should take the time to discuss your performance with you and, if applicable, will offer any advice and guidance on anything which you may need to improve for your next appointment. You can use this opportunity to ask questions about your performance, or clarification on anything that happened during your games which you were unsure about.
- You will receive email notification that your written performance feedback is available on your personal NPUA page.
- Once you return home you should submit your travel and subsistence expenses through your personal NPUA page. This should be submitted within 7 days of the end of the tournament.

Good luck, and enjoy your first tournament!

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