

LETTER FROM THE (NEW) PRESIDENT

Dear All

I feel very honoured to have become president of the Yorkshire Hockey Umpires Association in May of this year. My first act at the AGM was to thank my predecessor Ross Anderson for the sterling work he has carried out over the last two years and the next was to present Morag Wilkinson with the Martin Black award for services to the association. Morag, with help from Christine Renshaw, has instigated the Ladies neutral scheme over the last twelve months and, whilst not without hiccups, it has proved to be a success. The rearrangement of the ladies leagues means that the umpires involved may well move en bloc to the newly formed North Division 2 East (catchy title!) but their preparatory work in 2011-2012 season has paved the way for neutral scheme umpires for many of our Yorkshire ladies teams.

The ladies scheme, and indeed the men's scheme would benefit from more neutral umpires. I sincerely hope that we can welcome to the scheme those club umpires who, having cut their teeth in the lower leagues of Yorkshire hockey, fancy the challenge of umpiring a bit higher up and, more to the point, leaving the comfort of club umpiring where at least half of those on the pitch know you by name. Neutral umpiring places different demands on the umpire but can give a great deal of satisfaction when both teams appreciate a completely fair judgement has been made by umpires without affiliation to either team. The neutral scheme also allows progression from county hockey to regional and national standards of the game and progress can be rapid for the right umpire. If it's your ambition to one day emulate our own Hamish Jamson and officiate at Olympic Games or if you just want to push yourself as far as you can get, then please get in touch either with me or with our secretary Chris Blogg and we'll welcome you with open arms.

It is also my hope that, as an association, we can "add value" to our umpires by coaching programmes in which umpires are encouraged to think about and thereby improve their performances. Ross made heartfelt pleas last season for more umpire coaches and we are now seeing a new group of people starting on the road to becoming umpire coaches. We can always benefit from more coaches and I hope that our new and existing umpires will see an increase in the number of coaching's they receive during the season. I would also urge you all to make yourselves available when opportunities come along to take part in coaching days and seminars. We'll be sending out notification of such events and I promise you that you can always learn from attending them.

That's more than enough from me. I'm genuinely excited about the things that are happening in our association and I hope that you'll join with me and together we'll move our umpiring forward.

Have a great summer break and come back refreshed and raring to get back on the pitch.

Chris Bowers



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Coaching Day at Abbeydale

Fun day out – or learning? Actually – both!

YHUA ended season 2011-2012 with a day out at Abbeydale. Twelve of our umpires and four level 2 coaches spent a full and busy day at the County Championships finals watching the games but more particularly the National League umpires who were blowing in them. After introductions had been made in the Presidents room at Abbeydale, each of the 3 lead coaches, Mike Talbot, Christine Renshaw and Andy Stalker led their group of umpires out to watch the games with specific aspects of umpiring to observe and to make notes upon. When the game had finished we went back indoors to discuss what we had seen. Our discussions were halted whilst we had a short description of the role of the Umpire manager from Raj Khanna who was fulfilling that role at the tournament, and then by the match umpires, Mark Gray and Paul Gallop. YHUA members asked the umpires some great questions about the game and their umpiring styles and received well thought out answers from the umpires. After a superb lunch provided by Abbeydale we continued our “classroom sessions” with a talk about the control curve (not a ladder these days!) before again taking to the pitch to watch another county semi final and making similar notes to the morning game, this time with perhaps a different perspective on what the umpires were doing.

The day concluded at around 4.30pm and feedback suggests that people not only enjoyed a full and interesting programme, but also learned a good deal that can be taken into their own umpiring.

The aim of the day was to help to raise standards of umpiring amongst our members and we hope to hold more of these coaching days during next season. I would ask you all to consider joining in and seeing if there's something that can help you with your own umpiring progress.

Chris Bowers
Coaching Co-ordinator



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Twitter from the Umpires...

The New Rules - A player and umpire's perspective

These new rules, suffice to say, have been a good addition to the game and the desired effect of speeding up the game has been achieved; however there is still issue's occurring as the game evolves and players learn how to use the rules to their advantage. The 5 metre rule, where a foul close to the attacking circle must be taken back 5 metres from the circle before being allowed to be taken by the attacking team; there are problems with this occurring, essentially the advantage is being lost by the attackers as the time it takes to move the ball back 5 metres is allowing the defence to pack out the circle, making it harder for the attack to enter, and score. My question is, "Where is the advantage in that?" This issue is not helped by some pitches failing to have that 5 metre line marked on the pitch, which definitely gives a 'home advantage' and slows the play down, as umpire's can be particular about when they are happy you're 5 metres away from the D. By this point, all the defence are back. As an umpire, it is irritating because if the player isn't far enough away, you must bring the play back to the correct position, and essentially get berated by the 'sinned against' team, especially if they was taking the free hit quickly and scored. Either the defence complain at you for allowing it, or the attack complains at you for disallowing what they see as a legitimate goal. From the player's perspective, some may think an umpire's meticulousness is unfair as the umpire could be knowingly aiding the defending team therefore unwittingly causing friction between themselves and a team where they are questioning the umpire's integrity. As for pitches with the markings on, attackers who are quick to react need not wait for the umpire to direct the 5 metre distance as it is there in black and white, well green and white allowing the game to flow well, and use the rule of defenders within 5 metres of the taker being unable to engage the attacker, giving them the advantage, when the defender disadvantaged them by fouling them. Should we call for the 5 metre line to be mandatory, and give all teams a level playing field, or continue to allow the differences in pitch markings, making away trips for teams more difficult from the start?

Secondly, is the rule concerning direct free hits into the attacking circle within the final 23 metre line? This is a sensible new addition as it attempts to prevent 'crashing' the ball into the attacking circle and potentially injuring players, however there is a variation where you can aerial the ball across the attacking circle. This rule is useful, if you can aerial but in most games, it just doesn't happen. What does happen though is from long corners, or free hits near the corners, players attempt to play the ball to someone free near the top of the attacking circle, but inaccuracy in their passing means the ball cuts into the circle at a tangent. It is not necessarily played by a player within the circle, just cuts through it marginally, and by letter of the law umpires are forced to signal this and award a free hit to the defence. My question is, how much difference does it really mark, the ball cutting into the circle by a small amount, you can't aerial it to that person at the top, as it would be dangerous, so why not allow the ball to 'skim' the circle, as long as it isn't playable by any players? Potentially it will cause some controversy like how much is too much? It will also put emphasis on the umpires and potentially divide opinions and interpretations, but it could also benefit the game. Is it worth experimenting with this variation or keep things as they are?

Daniel Marsh

International Umpiring Congratulations

Congratulations to Yorkshire Umpire Lee Barron who has been promoted to FIH Indoor Grade 1, following his successful performance at a recent tournament.

FIH Indoor Grade 1 is the highest accolade for an indoor umpire (unlike outdoor) so many congratulations to Lee on this tremendous achievement.

Yorkshire Umpire Congratulations

Congratulations to 3 Men's Neutral Scheme Umpires who attained their Level 2 status this past season – Chris Blogg, Phil Bootland and Paul McCormick. Good luck to all three next season in their new leagues.

Keep a close eye out this summer for many of our Yorkshire HA and HUA members who are working at the Olympics! Keep a tally of how many you see – contributions and sightings welcomed in the next edition!

The TWELVE Cs of hockey umpiring

by
Chris Todd

EHB Level Three Hockey Umpire Coach

Concentration

Calmness and **C**oping with pressure

Composure and coolness

Communication

Co-operation

Confidence with **C**ommon sense

avoid being **C**asual and **C**omplacent

Courage

Convincing

Consistency



Hmm.....must ask our
Coach, how do I get
on the bus?...!
Err.....Mr Bowers.....



Neutral Scheme Umpires:

We are always looking for willing volunteers to expand the numbers, why not join and extend your umpiring skills across the region?

- Men contact Chris Blogg (see below)
- Ladies contact Morag Wilkinson (moragwilkinson@hotmail.com)

NEW WEBSITE:

From September 2012, all Men's appointments will be done through the new YHUA section of the North Hockey website. Please keep an eye on your e-mail inbox for your log on details.

You will need to confirm/add your contact details, and add your availability, for selection.

Best wishes for a restful "down" season!

Please remember – all Neutral Umpires have a **Code of Conduct** in regard Match Dress Code and standards of conduct both on and off the pitch.

Now is the time – especially with the sale on at Tempest Sports, to get any new Umpire shirts, ready for next season.



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If you would like to make a contribution to future editions please contact us and let us know/send it on for consideration.



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