



**Rules of Hockey**  
**Including Explanations**  
**Effective from 1 January 2006**

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**Responsibility and Liability**

Participants in hockey must be aware of the Rules of 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 exercise an important role controlling the game and ensuring fair play.

**Implementation and Authority**

The Rules of Hockey apply to all hockey players and officials. National Associations have discretion to decide the date of implementation at national level. The date of implementation for international competition is 1 January 2006.

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

**Availability of the Rules**

Information about the availability of the Rules on the FIH website and about the purchase of Rules books is included at the end of this publication.

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## INTRODUCTION: 2006

This website document is the only consolidated version of the text of the 2006 Rules of Hockey. Rules Books are not being printed for 2006 because there is only one change since 2005. An insert for 2005 Rules Books providing information about this change is available on the FIH website.

### RULES CHANGE 2006

The only change for 2006 is a reduction to 25mm in the permitted bow/rake in hockey sticks which was announced earlier in 2005. This website version of the rules includes this on page 19. For international competition, the date of implementation of this change is 1 January 2006 although National Associations have discretion to decide the date of implementation at national level.

### RULES DEVELOPMENTS

In previous sets of Rules we have described the objectives pursued by the Hockey Rules Board. They are repeated below because this is an ongoing task. They are:

- ensuring the game is easily understood by players, umpires, spectators and the media;
- recognising the importance of safety, skill and fair play;
- retaining the distinct characteristics of the game.

In this context, the penalty corner is currently under review by the Hockey Rules Board. It is a complex action which is not easily understood but on the other hand is a distinct characteristic of the game. The Board is also looking at the safety issues which can arise.

Another review focuses on encouraging attacking play and creating goal scoring opportunities from open play which is exciting both to take part in and to watch.

One of the ways in which these possible developments are pursued is through voluntary trials. The main trial pursued in the last few years has required at least three players from each team to remain outside the 23 metres area their team is defending. Consideration is being given to whether this might apply throughout a match or only when the attacking team is taking a free hit, side-line hit-in or corner inside the 23 metres area.

The Hockey Rules Board hopes that National Associations will continue to conduct trials of this Rule at all levels of hockey. In addition, the FIH will be applying this Rule in a small number of international tournaments over the next year or so. This will provide an opportunity for assessment of the effects of the trial Rule.

Trials and other Rules development activity are co-ordinated by the Rules Development Secretary, Peter von Reth. Peter is keen to receive feedback and comment on

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development ideas and can be contacted at Opaal 29, 5629 HP Eindhoven, Netherlands (email vonreth@iae.nl).

### THE FUTURE

The International Hockey Federation believes that hockey has a positive future as a thriving sport and can also contribute to the health of society by encouraging participation in sport.

The Hockey Rules Board has an important part to play in maintaining the enjoyability and profile of the game. It will do so by continuing to review the rules while being sensitive to the needs of everyone involved in hockey.

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### Membership of the Hockey Rules Board:

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## TERMINOLOGY

### **Player**

One of the participants in a team.

### **Team**

A team consists of a maximum of sixteen persons composed of a maximum of eleven players on the field and up to five substitutes.

### **Field Player**

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

### **Attack (Attacker)**

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

### **Defence (Defender)**

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

### **Back-line**

The shorter (55 metres) perimeter line.

### **Goal-line**

The back-line between the goal-posts.

### **Side-line**

The longer (91.40 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.

### **23 metres area**

The area enclosed by and including the line across the field 22.90 metres from each back-line, the relevant part of the side-lines, and the back-line.

### **Playing the ball**

Stopping, deflecting or moving the ball with the stick; in the case of the goalkeeper also stopping, deflecting or moving the ball with the kickers or leg-guards.

### **Hit**

Striking the ball using a swinging movement of the stick towards the ball.

### **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.

### **Flick**

Pushing the ball so that it is raised off 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.

### **Playing distance**

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

### **Tackle**

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

### **Offence**

An action contrary to the Rules penalised by an umpire.

## PLAYING THE GAME

### 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 field of play is rectangular, 91.40 metres long and 55.00 metres wide.
- 1.2 Side-lines 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 Lines known as 23 metres lines are marked across the field 22.90 metres from each back-line.
- 1.6 Areas referred to as the circles are marked inside the field around the goals and opposite the centres of the back-lines.
- 1.7 Penalty spots 150 mm in diameter are marked in front of the centre of each goal with the centre of each spot 6.40 metres from the inner edge of the goal-line.
- 1.8 All lines are 75 mm wide and are part of the field of play.
- 1.9 Flag-posts between 1.20 and 1.50 metres in height are placed at each corner of the field.
- 1.10 Goals are positioned outside the field of play at the centre of and touching each back-line.

### 2 *Composition of Teams*

- 2.1 Each team must have a goalkeeper on the field at all times during play:
  - a an incapacitated or suspended goalkeeper must be replaced by another goalkeeper or field player acting as a goalkeeper
  - b during the suspension of a goalkeeper, the team concerned has one less field player.

*At the completion of a temporary suspension, the captain is permitted: to re-instate the temporarily suspended goalkeeper*

*or*

*to continue to play with the replacement goalkeeper, in which case another field player is permitted to enter the field.*

- 2.2 Each team is permitted to substitute from a maximum of sixteen players:
  - 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
  - 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

*For the duration of a temporary suspension, the offending team plays with one less player. For each permanent suspension, the offending team plays for the remainder of the match with one less player.*

- e after completing a suspension, a player is permitted to be substituted without first returning to the field
- f field players must leave or enter the field for substitution purposes within 3 metres of the centre-line on a side of the field agreed with the umpires
- g goalkeepers are permitted to leave or enter the field for substitution near the goal they are defending
- h time is stopped for substitutions of goalkeepers but not for substitutions of field players.

- 2.3 For substitution purposes, a penalty corner is completed when:

- a a goal is scored
- b an attacker commits an offence
- c the ball travels more than 5 metres outside the circle
- d the ball travels outside the circle for the second time
- e the ball is played over the back-line and another penalty corner is not awarded
- f a defender commits an offence and another penalty corner is not awarded
- g a penalty stroke is awarded
- h a bully is awarded.

*If another penalty corner is awarded, substitution must not take place until that penalty corner has been completed.*

- 2.4 Field players who leave the field for injury treatment, refreshment, to change equipment or for some reason other than substitution are permitted to re-enter only between the 23 metres areas.
- 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 half-time interval.
- 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.
- 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 personal penalty is awarded if a captain does not exercise these responsibilities.*

### **4 Players' Clothing and Equipment**

*Tournament Regulations available from the FIH Office 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.
- 4.2 Players must not wear anything which is dangerous to other players.

*Field players are permitted to wear gloves for protection which do not increase the natural size of the hands significantly. It is recommended that field players wear shin, ankle and mouth protection.*

- 4.3 Goalkeepers must wear over any upper body protection a shirt or garment which is different in colour from that of both teams.

- 4.4 Protective headgear is compulsory for goalkeepers except when taking a penalty stroke.

*A helmet incorporating fixed full-face protection and cover for the entire head and throat is recommended.*

*It is also recommended that goalkeepers wear other protective equipment. The following are permitted for use only by goalkeepers: body, upper arm, elbow, forearm, hand 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 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 the stick must conform with the specification agreed by the Hockey Rules Board.

- 4.7 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 two periods of 35 minutes and a half-time interval of 5 minutes.

*Other periods and interval may be agreed by both teams except as specified in regulations for particular competitions.*

- 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 extra time and a penalty stroke competition as ways of reaching a result in a drawn match is included in Tournament Regulations available from the FIH Office.*

## **6 Start and Re-start the Match**

- 6.1 A coin is tossed and 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 match with a centre pass.
- 6.2 Direction of play is reversed in the second half of the match.
- 6.3 A centre pass is taken:
- to start the match by a player from the team winning the toss if they chose this option; otherwise by a player from the opposing team
  - after half-time by a player of the team which did not take the centre pass to start the match
  - after a goal by a player of the team against which the goal was scored or awarded.
- 6.4 Taking a centre pass:
- taken at the centre of the field
  - it is permitted to play the ball in any direction
  - 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
  - the procedures for taking a free hit apply.
- 6.5 A bully takes place to re-start a match when time or play has been stopped for an injury or for any other reason and no penalty has been awarded:
- a bully is taken close to the location of the ball when play was stopped but not within 15 metres of the back-line
  - the ball is placed between one player from each team who face each other with the goal they are defending to their right
  - 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
  - all other players must be at least 5 metres from the ball.
- 6.6 A free hit is taken by a defender 15 metres in front of the centre of the goal-line to re-start a match when a penalty stroke has been completed and no goal has been scored or awarded.

## **7 Ball Outside the Field**

- 7.1 The ball is out of play when it passes completely over the side-line or back-line.
- 7.2 Play is restarted by a player of the team which did not touch or play the ball immediately before it went out of play.
- 7.3 When the ball travels over the side-line, play is re-started where the ball crossed the line and the procedures for taking a free hit apply.
- 7.4 When the ball is played over the back-line and no goal is scored:
- if played by an attacker, play is re-started with the ball up to 15 metres from and in line with where it crossed the back-line and the procedures for taking a free hit apply
  - if played unintentionally by a defender or deflected by a goalkeeper, play is re-started with the ball on the mark 5 metres from the corner of the field on the side-line nearest to where the ball crossed the back-line and the procedures for taking a free hit apply
  - 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.*
- 8.2 A goal is scored if awarded as a result of a penalty stroke.

## **9 Conduct of Play: Players**

*Players are expected to act responsibly at all times.*

- 9.1 A match is played between two teams with not more than eleven players of each team on the field at the same time.
- 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 play the ball with the back of the stick.

9.6 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.

*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. If instead of stopping or deflecting a shot the ball is hit while above shoulder height and a goal is prevented, a penalty stroke must be awarded.*

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

*A ball is considered dangerous when it causes legitimate evasive action by players.*

*The penalty is awarded where the action causing the danger took place.*

9.8 Players must not intentionally raise the ball from a hit except for a shot at goal.

*A raised hit must be judged explicitly on whether or not it is raised intentionally. It is not an offence to raise the ball unintentionally from a hit, including a free hit, anywhere on the field unless it is dangerous.*

*If the ball is raised over an opponent's stick or body on the ground, even within the circle, it is permitted unless judged to be dangerous.*

*Players are permitted to raise the ball with a flick or scoop provided it is not dangerous. A flick or scoop towards an opponent within 5 metres is considered dangerous.*

9.9 Players must not approach within 5 metres of an opponent receiving a falling raised ball until it has been received, controlled and is on the ground.

*The initial receiver has a right to the ball. If it is not clear which player is the initial receiver, the player of the team which raised the ball must allow the opponent to receive it.*

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

*It is not an offence if the ball hits the foot, hand or body of a field player, unless that player or their team benefits from this.*

*No offence is committed if the ball hits the hand holding the stick but would otherwise have hit the stick.*

9.11 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.*

*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.*

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

9.13 Players must not intentionally enter the goal their opponents are defending.

9.14 Players must not force an opponent into offending unintentionally.

*Playing the ball clearly and intentionally into any part of an opponent's body may be penalised as an attempt to manufacture an offence. Forcing an opponent to obstruct (often emphasised by running into an opponent or by waving the stick) must also be penalised.*

9.15 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.

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



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

## **10 Conduct of Play: Goalkeepers**

- 10.1 Goalkeepers must not take part in the match outside the half of the field they are defending, 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, goalkeepers are permitted to:
- a use their stick, protective equipment or any part of their body to stop the ball
  - b use their stick, protective equipment or any part of their body to deflect the ball in any direction including over the back-line
  - c use their stick, kickers or leg guards to play the ball.
- 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.

## **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 hits in the circle, penalty corners, penalty strokes and goals in one half of the field.
- 11.4 Umpires are responsible for keeping a written record of goals scored or awarded and of warning or 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 half and for the completion of a penalty corner if a half is prolonged.
- 11.6 Umpires blow the whistle to:
- a start and end each half of the match
  - b start a bully
  - c enforce a penalty

- d start and end a penalty stroke
- e indicate a goal
- f re-start the match after a goal has been scored or awarded
- g re-start the match after a penalty stroke when a goal was not scored or awarded
- h stop the match for the substitution of a goalkeeper and to restart the match on completion of the substitution
- i stop the match for any other reason and to re-start it
- j indicate, when necessary, that the ball has passed wholly outside the field.

11.7 Umpires must not coach during a match.

11.8 If the ball strikes an umpire, unauthorised person or any loose object on the field, play continues.

## **12 Penalties**

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

*If awarding a penalty is not an advantage to the team which did not break the Rules, play must continue.*

12.2 A free hit is awarded to the opposing team:

- a for an offence by any player between the 23 metres areas
- b for an offence by an attacker within the 23 metres area their opponents are defending
- c for an unintentional offence by a defender outside the circle but within the 23 metres area 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 23 metres area 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 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
- c for defenders persistently crossing over the back-line before permitted during the taking of penalty corners.

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

- a a free hit may be progressed up to 10 metres

*A free hit to the attack cannot be progressed to inside the circle.*

- b a more severe penalty may be awarded
- c a personal penalty may be awarded
- d 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 hit:

- a a free hit 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 hit is taken must be more precise inside the 23 metres area especially when the offence occurs close to the circle.*

*A free hit to the attacking team a small distance outside the circle must not be dragged inside the circle; the ball must leave the stick before entering the circle.*

- b a free hit awarded outside the circle to the defence within 15 metres of the back-line is taken up to 15 metres from the back-line in line with the location of the offence, parallel to the side-line
- c a free hit awarded inside the circle to the defence is taken anywhere inside the circle or up to 15 metres from the back-line in line with the location of the offence, parallel to the side-line.

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

- a the ball must be stationary
- b the ball is pushed or hit and must move at least one metre before another player of the team which took the free hit is allowed to play it

*A 'dragging' action used to play the ball at a free hit must not result in playing the ball twice.*

- c the ball must not be raised intentionally
- d after playing the ball, the player taking the free hit must not play the ball again or approach within playing distance of it until it has been played by another player
- e opponents must be at least 5 metres from the ball.

*If a player is standing within 5 metres of the ball but not influencing play, the free hit need not be delayed.*

- f when a free hit is awarded to the attack within 5 metres of the circle, all players other than the player taking the free hit must be at least 5 metres from the ball.

13.3 Taking a penalty corner :

- a the ball is placed on the back-line inside the circle at least 10 metres from the goal-post on whichever side of the goal the attacking team prefers
- b an attacker pushes or hits the ball without intentionally raising it
- c the attacker taking the push or hit from the back-line 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 defender or attacker other than the attacker taking the push or hit from the back-line is permitted to be within 5 metres of the ball when the push or hit is taken
- f not more than five defenders, including the goalkeeper, must be positioned behind the back-line with their sticks, hands and feet not touching the ground inside the field
- g the other defenders must be beyond the centre-line

- h until the ball has been played, no attacker other than the one taking the push or hit from the back-line is permitted to enter the circle and no defender is permitted to cross the centre-line or back-line
- i after playing the ball, the attacker taking the push or hit from the back-line must not play the ball again or approach within playing distance of it until it has been played by another player
- j a goal cannot be scored until the ball has travelled outside the circle
- k if the first shot at goal is a hit (as opposed to a push, flick or scoop), the ball must cross the goal-line, or be on a path which would have resulted in it crossing the goal-line, at a height of not more than 460 mm (the height of the backboard) before any deflection, for a goal to be scored

*The requirements of this Rule apply even if the ball touches the stick or body of a defender before the first shot at goal.*

*If the first shot at goal is a hit and the ball is, or will be, too high crossing the goal-line it must be penalised even if the ball is subsequently deflected off the stick or body of another player.*

*The ball may be higher than 460 mm during its flight before it crosses the goal-line provided there is no danger and provided it would drop of its own accord below 460 mm before crossing the line.*

*'Slap' hitting the ball, which involves a long pushing or sweeping movement with the stick before making contact with the ball, is regarded as a hit.*

- l for second and subsequent hits at the goal and for flicks, deflections and scoops, it is permitted to raise the ball to any height but this must not be dangerous

*If a defender is within five 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 a defender is within five metres of the first shot at goal and is struck above the knee in a normal stance, the shot is judged to be dangerous and a free hit must be awarded to the defending team.*

- m the penalty corner Rules no longer apply if the ball travels more than 5 metres from the circle.

13.4 The match is prolonged at half-time and full-time to allow completion of a penalty corner or any subsequent penalty corner or penalty stroke; for this purpose, the penalty corner is completed when:

- a a goal is scored
- b an attacker commits an offence

- c the ball travels more than 5 metres outside the circle
- d the ball travels outside the circle for the second time
- e the ball is played over the back-line 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.

*If play is stopped during the taking of a penalty corner because of an injury or for any other reason and no penalty has been awarded, the penalty corner must be taken again.*

13.5 Taking a penalty stroke:

- a time is stopped when a penalty stroke is awarded
- b all players on the field other than the player taking the stroke and the defending goalkeeper must stand outside the 23 metres area and must not influence the taking of the stroke
- c the player taking the stroke must stand behind and within playing distance of the ball before beginning the stroke
- d the defending goalkeeper must stand with both feet on the goal-line and must not leave the goal-line or move either foot until the ball has been played
- e the defending goalkeeper must wear protective headgear
- f the whistle is blown when the player taking the stroke and the defending goalkeeper are in position
- g the player taking the stroke must not take it until the whistle has been blown

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

- h the player taking the stroke must not feint at playing the ball
- i the player taking the 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.*

- j the player taking the stroke must play the ball only once and must not subsequently approach either the ball or the goalkeeper.

13.6 The penalty stroke is completed when:

- a a goal is scored or awarded

- 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.

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

- a by the player taking the stroke: a free hit is awarded to the defence
- b when the goalkeeper prevents a goal being scored but leaves the goal-line or moves either foot before the ball has been played: the penalty stroke is taken again

*For the first offence of this type, the goalkeeper must be warned (green card) and for any subsequent offence the goalkeeper must be suspended (yellow card).*

- c for any other offence by the goalkeeper which prevents a goal being scored: a goal is awarded
- d for an offence by the goalkeeper which does not prevent a goal being scored: the penalty stroke is taken again
- e for an offence by another player of either team: the penalty stroke is taken again.

#### **14 Personal Penalties**

14.1 For any offence, the offending player may be:

- a cautioned (indicated by spoken words)
- b warned (indicated by a green card)
- c temporarily suspended for a minimum of 5 minutes of playing time (indicated by a yellow card)
- d permanently suspended from the current match (indicated by a red card).

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

14.2 Temporarily suspended players must remain in a designated place until permitted by the umpire who suspended them to resume play.

14.3 Temporarily suspended players are permitted to rejoin their team at half-time after which they must return to a designated place to complete their suspension.

14.4 The intended duration of a temporary suspension may be extended for misconduct by a player while suspended.

14.5 Permanently suspended players must leave the field and its surrounding area.

## UMPIRING

### 1 Objectives

- 1.1 Umpiring 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 better: umpires must aim to become even better with each and every match
  - g natural: an umpire must be themselves, and not imitate another person, at all times.
- 1.4 Umpires must:
- a have a thorough knowledge of the Rules of 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 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, warning (green card), or a temporary (yellow card) or permanent (red card) suspension. Cautions, warnings 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 it is possible for a player to receive two green or two yellow cards for different offences during the same match but when an offence for which a card has been awarded is repeated, the same card must not be used again and a more severe penalty must be awarded
  - f when a second yellow card is awarded, the period of suspension must be significantly longer than the first suspension

- g there must be a clear difference between the duration of a yellow card suspension for a minor offence and the duration for a more serious and/or physical offence
- h when a player 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.

### 3 **Umpiring skills**

3.1 The main umpiring skill areas are:

- a match preparation
- b co-operation
- c mobility and positioning
- d whistling
- e signalling.

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 clothing appropriate to the conditions must be worn
- e footwear must suit field conditions and assist mobility
- f umpiring equipment includes a copy of the current Rules book, a loud and distinctive whistle, a stop watch, coloured cards to indicate personal penalties and materials to record match details.

3.3 Co-operation:

- a good team-work and co-operation between umpires is essential

- b prior to a match, umpires must discuss and agree how they are going to work together to assist each other. Eye contact between umpires must be practised and maintained
- 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 written record of goals scored and cards issued must be kept by both umpires and confirmed at the end of the match.

3.4 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 in general, the most suitable position for umpires is ahead of and on the right of the attacking team
- f for play between the centre-line and 23 metres area, umpires must be positioned near their side-line
- g when play is in the 23 metres area or circle, umpires must move further into the field away from the side-lines 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, umpires must take up a position behind and to the right of the player taking the stroke
- j umpires must not allow their positioning to interfere with the flow of play
- k umpires must face the players all the time.

3.5 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.

3.6 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.

**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-line: 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: point one arm at the corner flag nearest where the ball crossed the back-line.

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 5 metres distance: extend one arm straight up in the air showing an open hand with all 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 hit: indicate the direction with one arm raised horizontally
- c free hit progressed up to 10 metres: raise one arm vertically with fist clenched
- d penalty corner: point both arms horizontally towards the goal
- e 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 field of play is rectangular, 91.40 metres long bounded by side-lines and 55.00 metres wide bounded by back-lines.

*Minimum "run-off" areas are recommended outside the back-lines (5 metres) and side-lines (4 metres).*

- 1.2 Markings:

- a no marks other than those described in this Rule are to be made on the playing surface
- b lines are 75 mm wide and must be clearly marked along their entire length
- c the side-lines and back-lines and all markings enclosed between them are part of the field
- d all marks must be made in white.

- 1.3 Lines and other marks:

- a side-lines: 91.40 metres long perimeter lines
- b back-lines: 55.00 metres long perimeter lines
- c goal-lines: the parts of the back-lines between the goal-posts
- d centre-line: across the middle of the field
- e 22.90 metres lines across the field 22.90 metres from each back-line as measured between the furthest edges of each line

*The areas enclosed by and including the 22.90 metres lines, the relevant part of the side-lines, and the back-line are known as the 23 metres areas.*

- f lines 300 mm long marked outside the field on each side-line with the further edge of the lines 14.63 metres from and parallel to the outer edge of the back-lines
- g lines 300 mm long marked outside the field on each side-line with the further edge of the lines 5 metres from and parallel to the outer edge of the back-lines

- h lines 300 mm long marked outside the field on each back-line on both sides of the goal at 5 metres and 10 metres from the outer edge of the nearer goal-post, as measured between the furthest edges of each line

*The markings described in Rules 1.3 f, g and h were moved from inside to outside the field with effect from 2001. The distances in Rule 1.3 h were converted to metric at the same time. These revised markings apply to all new and re-marked fields. However, existing fields with the previously specified markings may continue to be used.*

- i lines 150 mm long marked outside the field on each back-line 1.83 metres from the centre of the back-line, as measured between the nearest edges of these lines
- j penalty spots 150 mm in diameter marked in front of the centre of each goal with the centre of each spot 6.40 metres from the inner edge of the goal-line.

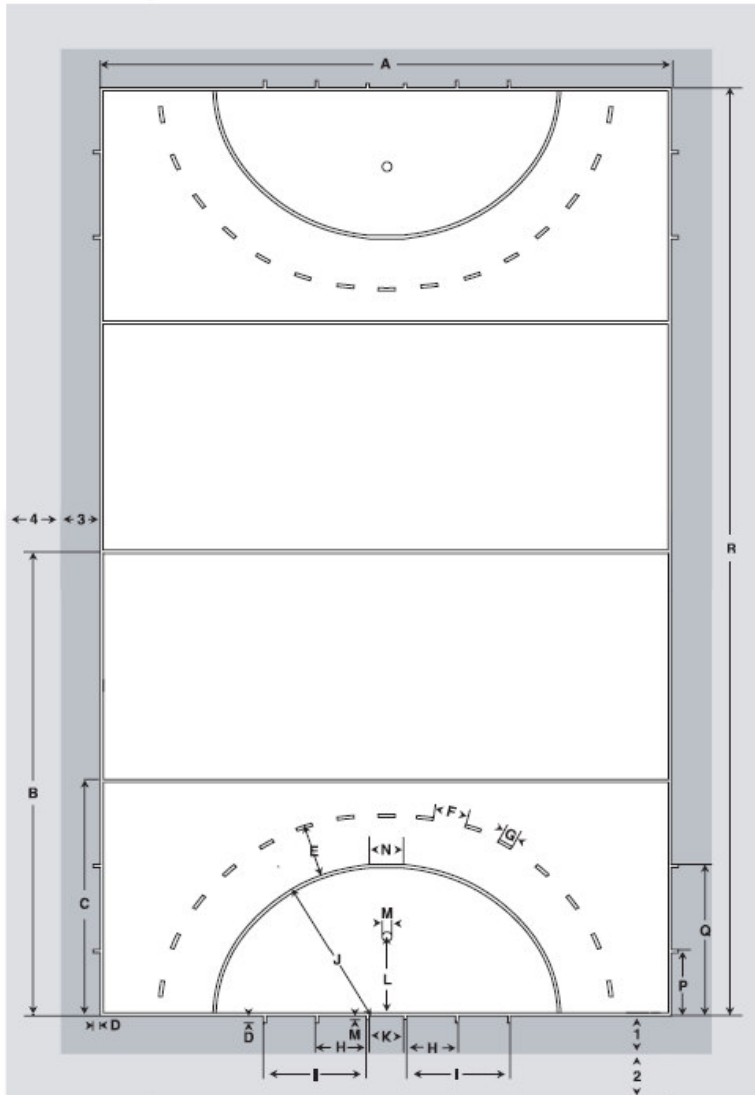
- 1.4 Circles:

- a lines 3.66 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 3.66 metres lines to the outside edges of the back-lines is 14.63 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 3.66 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 5 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 3 metres long

*These broken lines became mandatory for international matches with effect from 1 June 2000. Their adoption for other matches is at the discretion of National Associations.*



**Figure 1: Field of Play**



**Field Dimensions**

Code	Metres	Code	Metres
A	55.00	M	0.15
B	45.70	N	3.66
C	22.90	P	5.00
D	0.30	Q	14.63
E	5.00	R	91.40
F	3.00	1	minimum 3.00
G	0.30	2	2.00
H*	4.98*	(1 + 2)	minimum 5.00
I*	9.98*	3	minimum 3.00
J	14.63	4	1.00
K	3.66	(3 + 4)	minimum 4.00
L	6.4		

\* Dimensions H and I are measured from the goal-post line and not from the goal-post itself; the dimensions from the goal-post are 5.00 metres and 10.00 metres respectively.

1.5

Goals:

- two vertical goal-posts joined by a horizontal cross-bar are placed at the centre of each back-line on the external marks
- the goal-posts and cross-bar are white, rectangular in cross section, 50 mm wide and between 50 mm and 75 mm deep
- the goal-posts must not extend vertically beyond the cross-bar and the cross-bar must not extend horizontally beyond the goal-posts
- the distance between the inner edges of the goal-posts is 3.66 metres and the distance from the lower edge of the cross-bar to the ground is 2.14 metres
- the space outside the field, behind the goal-posts and cross-bar and enclosed by the net, side-boards and backboard is a minimum of 0.90

metres deep at the cross-bar and a minimum of 1.22 metres deep at ground-level.

1.6 Side-boards and back-boards:

- a side-boards are 1.22 metres long and 460 mm high
- b back-boards are 3.66 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 side-boards and parallel to the back-line, and are fixed to the end of the 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 side-boards and back-board
- 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
- e the nets are fitted loosely to prevent the ball rebounding.

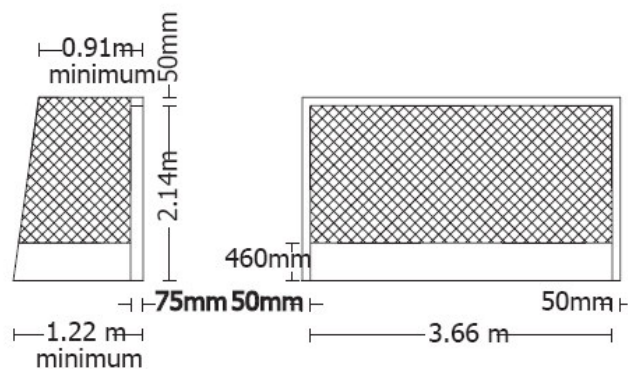


Figure 2: Goal

1.8 Flag-posts:

- a flag-posts are between 1.20 and 1.50 metres in height
- b flag-posts are placed at each corner of the field
- c flag-posts must not be dangerous
- d if unbreakable, flag-posts must be attached to a spring base
- e flag-posts carry flags, not exceeding 300 mm in width or length

**2 Stick**

2.1 The stick:

- a the stick has had a traditional shape which will be retained
- b no particular handle or head shape or design has been approved, but the introduction of extreme shapes or designs outside the specified parameters will not be permitted.

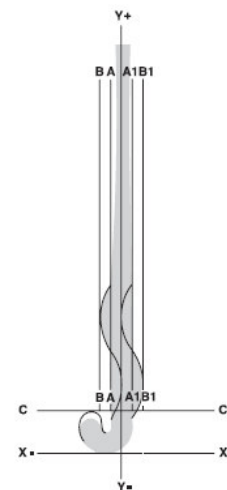


Figure 3: The Stick

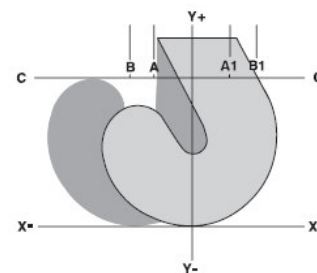


Figure 4: The Head of the Stick

2.2 Diagrams of the stick:

- a descriptions and specifications in this Rule relate to figures 5 and 6

- b the stick comprises two identifiable parts, the handle and the head
- c the stick is shown in both figures with the handle in a vertical position, in the main perpendicular to a level horizontal surface (the X-axis)
- d the curved base of the head is shown placed on the X-axis, which is the start of its vertical length (the Y-axis)
- e the head terminates at a line C - C drawn parallel to the X-axis, 100 mm along the Y-axis, in a positive direction (towards Y+)
- f the Y-axis is perpendicular to the X-axis; for measurement purposes the stick is aligned so that the Y-axis passes through the centre of the top of the handle
- g the handle starts at the line C - C and continues in the direction Y+.

### 2.3 Shape and dimensions of the stick:

- a the entire stick must be smooth and must not have any rough or sharp parts
- b the handle and head must be of one smooth continuous cross-section along the line C - C
- c the head must be a 'J' or 'U' shape the upturned or open end of which is limited by the line C - C
- d the head is not limited along the X-axis
- e 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)
- f the flat playing side of the head of the stick and any continuation of it along the handle must be smooth and in a single plane with any convex or concave deviation across that plane being no more than 4 mm in any direction

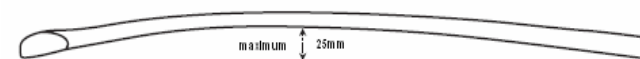
*Deviation across the playing side of the head of the stick is tested by placing a straight edge across this side at any point along the head and using a standard pointed depth gauge. The depth of concave curvature below the straight edge must not exceed 4 mm; the sum of depths below the straight edge at the edges of the stick must not exceed 8 mm.*

- g inclusive of any additional coverings used, the stick must be able to pass through a ring with an interior diameter of 51 mm
- h the lines A - A and A1 - A1 in the diagrams are 51 mm apart parallel to and equidistant from the Y-axis
- i the lines B - B and B1 - B1 are 20 mm from A - A and A1 - A1 respectively
- j it is permitted for the handle to be bent or curved to protrude beyond the line A - A once only along the length of the Y-axis, to the limiting line B - B at maximum

*The shape and dimensions of the stick are tested using a flat surface marked with the lines shown in figure 5. The stick is laid playing side down on the surface.*

- k 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.

*The rake or bow is tested using a pointed wedge the point of which is 25 mm from the flat base. The stick is laid on a flat surface. The wedge must not pass completely under the stick at any place along its length.*



**Figure 5: The Stick Rake or Bow**

### 2.4 Playing side of the stick:

- a the playing side is the entire side shown in the diagrams and the edges of that side
- b the edges and the non-playing side must be rounded and must have a continuous smooth profile.

*Players must be aware that manufacturers may refuse to replace sticks which have been broken or damaged as a consequence of using the edge of the stick to hit the ball because many sticks have not been made for use in this way.*

### 2.5 The total weight of the stick must not exceed 737 grams.

### 2.6 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 80km/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%.*

- 2.7 Materials:
- a 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
  - b the application of tapes and resins is permitted provided that the stick surface remains smooth and that it conforms to the stick specifications.
- 2.8 The FIH reserves the right to prohibit any stick which, in the opinion of the Hockey Rules Board, is unsafe or likely to have a detrimental impact on playing the game.

### **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 length of 355 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.

*The dimensions of goalkeeper's hand protectors and leg guards are measured using gauges with the relevant internal dimensions.*

## Additional Information Available

The International Hockey Federation can provide information on various topics to assist participation in the sport.

### Indoor Hockey

A separate publication provides:

- the Rules of Indoor Hockey.

### Synthetic Fields and Lighting (Outdoor)

Information is available about:

- performance requirements
- irrigation recommendations
- guidelines for care and maintenance
- approved synthetic field manufacturers
- artificial lighting.

### Tournament Regulations and Management

Information includes:

- roles and responsibilities of tournament officials
- specification of team clothing, equipment and colours
- advertising
- interruptions of a match
- procedures for handling protests
- competition plan and ranking procedure (including a penalty stroke competition).

### Umpiring

Information of interest to umpires includes:

- grading criteria for FIH umpires
- handbook for international umpires including information about umpiring skills, tournament and mental preparation and a fitness programme
- manual for umpires managers including information about duties, umpire coaching, fitness testing, performance feedback and assessor forms.

### Hockey Development Resources

Various materials produced by hockey participants throughout the world are available in print, on video and on compact-disk. They include:

- beginner, development and elite coaching
- school and youth programmes

- mini-hockey
- course manuals.

The information above is available on the FIH website:

[www.FIHockey.org](http://www.FIHockey.org)

or from the FIH Office:

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

Telephone: ++41 21 641 0606

Fax: ++41 21 641 0607

E-mail: [info@worldhockey.org](mailto:info@worldhockey.org)

Internet: [www.worldhockey.org](http://www.worldhockey.org)

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### **Purchase of Rules Books**

- Copies of the 2005 Rules Books are available as follows.
- A small supplement to update the Rules Books for 2006 will be included with all orders.
- Payment must accompany each order.
- Each Rules Book costs €3 (or £2 for UK orders) excluding postage and handling.
- Remittances must be payable to the International Hockey Federation (or for UK orders to the Welsh Hockey Umpires Association or WHUA).
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