

DIRECTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF 2009

“NEW” FREE-HIT RULE

Foreword : these are a simplified version of the Directions given to AHL umpires for the current AHL season and are already being implemented.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE OBJECTIVES OF THE NEW RULES FOR 2009:

- a) To speed-up the game.
- b) To reduce the possibility of danger at “dead-ball” situations in the attacking 23m area of the field.

NOTE – The free-hit, centre-pass, sideline hit-ins and “long corners” are now grouped together & are interpreted in the same manner.

NOTE- The ball must still travel 1m. if passed directly to a team mate from a FH.

1.THE SELF-PLAY F.H:

The team taking the FH:

- *A player must make 2 clear motions – a stop with a push/hit to follow immediately.
- *A FH is not taken if a player just dribbles off with the ball.
- *The player must stop the ball before taking the FH – this indicates that the FH is to be taken (the same degree of leniency in applying this will be as per the “old” rule in open play).
- *The ball does not have to travel a metre before the 2nd motion.
- *It is possible for a player to “self-pass” & throw an “overhead” as the 2nd motion but safety of players is paramount & DANGER must be penalised if this is used inappropriately.

NOTE- Players from the same team do not have to be 5m from the FH except in the attacking 23m area.

NOTE- The team with the FH does not have to wait for opposition players to move 5m from where the FH is to be taken.

2. OPPOSITION PLAYERS

Opposition players **MUST** move 5m from where the FH is to be taken.

Umpires **MUST** take action against players deliberately preventing a quick FH – this is gamesmanship. A warning (verbal or “green”) may be appropriate but those actions which are clearly designed to slow the game are intentional & repeated offences merit temporary suspensions.

UMPIRES MUST BE PRO-ACTIVE IN MOVING PLAYERS 5M FROM FHs (VERBAL & WHISTLING).

***OPPOSITION PLAYERS IN “THE 5” CANNOT INTERFERE WITH THE PLAY UNTIL THEY HAVE RETREATED AT LEAST 5M FROM THE SITE OF THE FH.**

PLAYING AT THE BALL IN ANY WAY,”GETTING IN THE WAY” OR RUNNING NEXT TO THE BALL CARRIER WHO HAS TAKEN THE FH IS NOT ACCEPTABLE & SHOULD BE UMPIRED CONSISTENTLY IN LINE WITH OTHER EXAMPLES OF “GAMESMANSHIP”.

3. LOCATION OF A FH:

- a) In open-play allow the FH to be taken in the general proximity of the offence – as per the “old” rule.
- b) Inside the attacking 23- the FH must be taken close to the site of the offence.
- c) Inside the dotted circle- **THE BALL MUST BE TAKEN BACK TO THE NEAREST POINT 5m FROM THE CIRCLE.**
- d) Defensive FHs & 15s are as per “old” rule.

4. FH’s TAKEN INSIDE THE ATTACKING 23 AREA:

This has ambiguous wording in the FIH rule but is very simple & MUST be applied as directed:

- a) All players other than the player taking the FH must be 5m from the ball when the FH, LC or sideline hit is taken.**
- b) BEFORE the ball can enter the circle it MUST be touched by another player OR**
- c) For a player taking a “self-play FH”: the ball must be dribbled at least 5m before it is played into the circle. A player can “self-pass” & then dribble directly into the circle, or pass the ball once the ball has moved 5m from the site of the FH.**

NOTE: Hard hits or pushes to a team-mate, who is 5m away from the FH when it is taken AND outside the circle, with the intent of deflecting into the circle are permissible –WITH THE PROVISIO THAT “DANGER” BE PENALISED IF APPLICABLE.

d) Umpires must be pro-active with regard to FH location – if the ball is in the wrong spot communicate this to the players before they have the chance to take the – avoid “replays”.

AT ALL TIMES UMPIRES, COACHES & PLAYERS
SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THE OBJECTIVES OF THE
RULES:

TO SPEED-UP THE GAME & REDUCE THE
POSSIBILITIES FOR DANGER

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