



## **Amendments to FIH Rules of Hockey to come into force on 1 January 2019.**

**Lausanne, Switzerland:** Every second year, the Rules Committee of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) may make proposals to amend the rules of hockey. In 2018, the following proposals have been made by the Committee and approved by the Executive Board:

### **• Introduction of the match format of four quarters as standard**

In international matches, teams have been playing four quarters for some years and it is felt that uniformity in match formats can be achieved when all match formats are based on a four quarter principle. Like in international matches, time is stopped between the awarding of a penalty corner and the taking of that penalty corner. Other than in international matches, where this is covered by FIH Tournament Regulations, time is not stopped to celebrate goals as this was introduced primarily for television coverage. The four quarters has additional advantages at junior levels of the sport in which coaches often umpire youth/school matches and the additional breaks provide for coaching opportunities.

### **• Removal of Goalkeeping privileges for substitute field player**

A mandatory experiment, with effect from 1 January 2019, taking out the option for teams to play with a field player with goalkeeping privileges. Teams have now two options: they either play with a goalkeeper who wears full protective equipment comprising at least headgear, leg guards and kickers and who is also permitted to wear goalkeeping hand protectors and other protective equipment, or they play with only field players. Any change between these options should be treated as a substitution. It is hoped that this experimental rule will enhance safety as field players will no longer have goalkeeping privileges so will not be entitled to use their body to stop shots at goal and it also enhances the promotion of the sport by eliminating the issue of outfield players wearing other shirts to indicate goalkeeping privileges.

### **• Defending free hits within 5 meters of the circle**

The explanation for how to treat free hits for the attacker close to the circle has been changed in Rules 13.2.f. It has now been made clear that players other than the attacker taking the free hit must be at least five meters away, including when they are in their circle. If the attacker however chooses to take the free hit immediately, then defenders who are inside the circle and within five meters from the ball may shadow around the inside of the circle as per the explanation of the rule before 2019. This has the advantage of not preventing the quickly taken free hit which has been widely welcomed by coaches and players, whilst maintaining the 5m rule used everywhere else on the pitch to provide space for the free hit taker.

### **• Free hits awarded inside the defensive circle**

As in Indoor Hockey a defender may now take a free hit awarded in the circle anywhere inside the circle or up to 15 meters from the back-line in line with the location of the offence, parallel to the side-line.

### **• Completion of a penalty corner**

Rule 13.6 that described the completion of a penalty corner for substitution purposes and for a penalty corner at the end of a period, has been deleted. The option that a penalty corner is completed when the ball travels outside the circle for the second time, no longer exists.

These amendments will **come into force on 1 January 2019.**

These detailed revisions to the Rules of Hockey will be available from Friday 21st December 2018 on the FIH Rules app which can be downloaded [here](#) for the iOS version or [here](#) for the Android version.