



New Rules of Hockey for 2019-20 season (amended version after YHUA meeting)

(Rule changes in black. Explanatory comments in red are mainly for players.)

1. No 'kicking backs' anymore, just a goalie wearing the goalie kit and ten field players, or 11 field players instead.

2. Free hits within 5m of the D

Defenders already within 5m of the attacker who takes a quick self-pass can shadow inside the D (and, as before, not engage until the ball had gone 5m).

If the attacker doesn't do a quick self-pass, everyone has to retreat 5m. Once you've gone 5m you can engage as soon as the hit is taken.

The attacker won't be able to enter the D with the ball anyway until it's moved 5m.

If a defender is 'caught' within 5m of a very quick self-pass because 'THERE WASN'T TIME TO GET OUT OF THE WAY', the rule is the same as it used to be. Go 5m away before engaging or shadow just inside the circle but don't interfere until the ball has travelled 5m, obviously. What's changed is that if the defenders have the time to back up 5m, they must back up 5m.

We'll have to see how this works out and good luck with it.

So, defenders, don't walk back like a snail, as you may risk getting on the wrong side of an umpire eager to give a penalty corner and show he knows the new rule at your expense. Tactically, it's much better to move out of the way quickly and set yourself to face the free hit from 5m.

3. A defensive free hit given inside the D can be taken anywhere in the D. If you take it outside it must be as the previous rule (in line with the offence). It's now the same as indoor hockey.

But the above change does not apply to the taking of a 'sixteen', after an attacker plays the ball out over the back line.

4. If an attacker enters the D early (encroaches) at a short corner, it's the injector who is banished to the half way line, not the 'encroacher'.

The change is trying to make it more of a punishment to the offending team.

5. Defenders can now wear face masks for the duration of the penalty corner, which is more sensible. You could even take a 'sixteen' still wearing the mask if you pass to someone else, but not set off up field.

If a piece of kit from a defender (eg. face mask) lying on the pitch in the D is hit by the ball and prevents a probable goal it's a penalty flick.

Presumably it's a penalty corner if it prevents possession by the attacking team and if it makes no difference to the game play on. That's what I'd give anyway.

6. The definition of a 'push' now says the ball can be 'in contact' with the stick as well as 'close to' it when the push is started.

Will this technicality make a difference to your game?

7. 'Offences' now apply to members of the 'opposing' team, not your own team. So hits lifted dangerously to your own team members can be judged as not an offence.

Interesting.