

VOLUME 29

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Chairman's Letter

Dear Member,

The end of another season is almost here – if there is an end to the hockey season with all the summer leagues that go on! Once again Avon umpires have been very much to the fore in enabling West events to go ahead. The season seems to have been a very quiet one as far as the telephone goes and Dear Marge has had her quietest season ever.

The alternative positioning seems to have been adopted and adapted by many umpires and the consensus seems to be that applied correctly it is far more demanding physically, necessary to anticipate play more, and allows a much greater degree of help and co-operation to take place between umpires. This must be better for the game, and teams we have spoken to say that **WHEN** it is applied properly it gives them more confidence in the umpiring 'team'.

However, one thing that did emerge when talking to clubs was that there are still too many umpires not working as a pair, although things are much improved over the last few seasons.

We had an enjoyable open meeting last month when my daughter Claire, with Gill Prophet, gave a very interesting and thought provoking presentation on the goalkeepers perspective of umpiring and umpires. I should like to thank them for their time and for giving us an entertaining meeting.

This will be my last Chairman's letter to you. I am standing down at the end of this season and not seeking re-election. I should like to thank all of you who have given me such support over the years. It has been a privilege to serve on your committee.

Also standing down as Secretary is John James. John is not seeking re-election either. John has been a member of the Committee and Secretary since the start of our Association 13 years ago. In the space of my letter I cannot begin to cover all that John has done over the years, or give justice to his dedication to Avon Women's Hockey. He has given unstintingly of his time to a very important and time-consuming job and ensured the smooth running of the Association's dealings from English Hockey downwards. We all owe a great deal to John and we thank him sincerely for his years of service.

Lastly, the date of the AGM is I hope we shall see many of you there.

Best Wishes

John Burr.

ADVANTAGE

Dictionary Definition

Any condition, circumstance, event of favourable character, likely to promote success, happiness.

Means of gaining desired end.

Source of benefit or profit.

Why play Advantage ?

Advantage is merely a means of improving the flow of a game.

A good advantage can sometimes penalise the offending team far more than the awarding of the penalty.

A game is far more enjoyable for both the players and the umpires when it is not littered with unnecessary stoppages.

When to play Advantage

Always play as much advantage as possible to the attackers in the circle. This is a place where it is possible to hold the whistle longer and maybe create a goal scoring opportunity.

You should always attempt to play advantage to the attackers in the 25 yard area when they are moving towards the circle.

Advantage can also be played when a midfield player is moving forward into space.

Advantage can only be played until the next incident, i.e. BEFORE the next tackle, pass or shot at goal.

Where NOT to play advantage

Never play advantage when a foul is committed on the goalkeeper.

Advantage should not be applied to defending players in the circle

It is very rarely applied to defending players within the 25 yard area excepting when a whistle may actually prevent a quick ball leading to an attacking opportunity.

There is often less advantage on the left attacking side of the circle than there is on the right.

Points to remember when playing advantage

Don't hold the whistle too close to your mouth when the attack has the ball in the circle. It can be too easy to blow quickly for offences committed by the defence thus preventing any advantage to the attack.

Don't be tempted to give the player two bites of the cherry i.e.. if you play an advantage and the player who is both balanced and in control then proceeds to fluff her shot do not be tempted to blow for the original foul.

The fact that advantage has been played does not stop you from penalising the offending player with a card should you have wished to have done so had you blown the whistle for the original offence. i.e.. wait until the ball next goes out of play and show the player the appropriate card.

Always, wherever possible, signal any advantage you are playing. Not only does this make the players aware that you have seen the original offence, but it will also prevent your colleague from blowing their whistle.

Very rarely does an advantage assist the defence. A quick whistle in these circumstances is often the best advantage you can give.

Never play advantage when it might lead to danger to players of either side.

Acknowledge good advantages played by your colleague. It is rare for the players to do so, but can be a great boost to confidence and enjoyment if it is obvious to someone that you have played a good advantage.

One of the best feelings in umpiring is when an advantage played by yourself leads to a team scoring a goal. So ENJOY it.

If you are too quick with your whistle, and it happens to all of us, don't be afraid to apologise to the player concerned.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

| | <u>EVENT</u> | <u>VENUE</u> |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 05/03/00 | Mini Hockey | Clifton College |
| 12/03/00 | U19 Club Championship | Clifton College |
| 19/03/00 | County Championship single matches | |
| 15-16/04/00 | County Championship Weekend | Bournemouth |
| 20-24/04/00 | U16 & U18 Six Nations Tournament | |
| 21-24/05/00 | European Clubs Cup Winners Cup | |
| 29/04/00 | Veterans Championship | Bournemouth |
| 13/05/00 | U19 Club Championship Finals | |
| 14/05/00 | Cup / Plate / Under 15 Cup Finals | Milton Keynes |
| 20/05/00 | Veterans Championship Finals | |
| 21/05/00 | Mini Hockey Finals | |
| 27/05/00 | County Championship Finals | |

1999/00 Committee

Chairman John Burr
Secretary John James
Treasurer Val Harding
Committee Malcolm Kingshott
Bob Pearce
Liz Powell
Gill Prophet
Lynda Watts

Dear Marge

Your questions answered

Dear Marge,

I'm on a quest for truth, justice and the American wayoops! Sorry, too many E numbers in my lunch time fizzy drink!!

I need to know the answer to the following:

If a player goes down to make a tackle or intercept the ball and the ball hits the hand that is holding the stick, is that an offence? Is her hand deemed to be part of the stick?

The reason for asking is that I blew for such an incident and Sam Peach from Exeter disagreed (in a very agreeable way, I must say!) about the decision. We chatted after the game and I promised to check up on it.

Your expert opinion is eagerly awaited.
Concerned

Dear Concerned,

I am afraid Sam was right in this case. The hand holding the stick is deemed to be part of the stick and if the ball hits the hand instead of the stick there is no foul.

However, (there is always a hitch!) if the player uses her hand to gain an advantage as might happen at a PC stop, then it becomes a foul.

Wonderful to hear that you chatted after the game. Well done!

Dear Marge,

I recently did a game on grass where the girl taking the hit in from the sideline lifted the ball just a few inches to help clear the tufts of grass. Technically she was lifting the ball deliberately but there was no danger to the teams and it did help the game flow a little more. I did not deem it to be a foul but the captain of the team queried this with me at half time.

Was I right not to penalise?

Old Fogie!

Dear Old Fogie,

Sounds as if you brought a much needed breath of common sense to the game if you ask me!

I can appreciate the concern as it clearly says in the rule book that players cannot deliberately lift a ball from this position. However (again!), umpires are not required to blow the lifted ball unless there has been an advantage gained from it or that it was dangerous to other players. A lifted ball need only be a few inches off the ground for it to go over defensive players sticks and an advantage gained, so watch for that at hit-ins

It seems as though the advantage gained from the lifted ball in this case was to both teams and the umpires!

Dear Marge,

During a recent match I umpired, there was a time when an illegal substitution took place which resulted in a team having 12 players on the pitch. Neither myself nor my colleague noticed this at first and the game went on for a few more moments. When it was realised, my colleague gave a penalty corner to the opposite team as a punishment for the foul.

Was she right?

Perplexed

Dear Perplexed,

You are right. There is no penalty in the rule book for such an offence. The best policy is to remove the extra player asap and start the game with a bully (Not within 16 yds of the goal) or with the penalty that was awarded when play stopped.

I remember back in the dark ages when the rolling substitutions first came into play, that this may have been included as a possible penalty at that time but it is not now.

Dear Marge,

I have just finished umpiring a game where there was a person on the backline coaching the GK for much of the game. It was very off-putting as I spent much of the time wondering whether this action is legal and whether I should be stopping it. In the end I did nothing but am wondering whether now whether I should have spoken to them.

What do you think?

Baffled

Dear Baffled,

You are right to check up on this as the rules have altered in the last couple of seasons. There used to be no coaching allowed from the sidelines by the team or the coach. As this was practically impossible to police with people claiming they were just spectators etc., common sense has prevailed and the rule has been abandoned.

Coaching from the side of the pitch is allowed as long as there is no abuse of the umpire or opposition and there is no intimidation of players. If you feel that the person coaching has been over zealous in their comments then the umpire should speak to the captain who is responsible for the actions of all the team members and any spectators who are supporting the team. The captain must speak to the person involved.

Should you have any questions for Marge, no matter how trivial, please send them to any member of the committee.

This is your Newsletter and any comments or views you may have would be gratefully received, please send them to any member of the Committee.