



Minutes of Committee Meeting held on Sunday 28th June 2015 at 10:30am

Present: Chairman - Warren McCully (WMcC), Robert Johnston (RJ), Graham Hohn (GH), Eamonn McFerran (EMcF), Tom Goode (TG) & Peter Murphy (PM).

Apologies: Geoff Conn (GC), Gillian Johnston (GJ) & Aisling Keogh (AK).

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

Minutes of Previous Meeting (conference call) held on 19th March 2015

1. The minutes of the previous meeting (conference call) were not available. Simon O'Connor (Past Hon Secretary) will be contacted for these and the AGM minutes.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

Matters Arising

2. Andrew Groves supplied a full stock report on existing IHUA shirts. Action closed.
3. Crozier Deane wrote re umpire insurance. WMcC replied to explain nuances of insurance in various fixtures depending on status of match and competition (national or provincial). Crozier will produce guidance on insurance cover.
4. WMcC responded to email from Tom Hipwell (Chairman of LHUA). Action closed. TG mentioned a further point arising; that no-one from LHUA attended the Umpire Assessors Course in May despite raising this as an issue in their earlier letter.

Correspondence

5. Email from Andrew Groves

Clothing and new IHUA gear, and referenced recent supply of clothing for LHUA. Asking if IHUA are willing to order a new batch of clothing with new IHUA logo? (See paragraph 18. later under Sponsorship.)

6. Email from Gillian Garrett

Thanking IHUA for all their financial and overall support for her trip to England (GB v Ireland matches) to prepare for her World League 2 Appointment. The Committee recorded its pleasure that Gillian was recently awarded her FIH International badge and will write to congratulate her. PM suggested a formal presentation to Gillian be organised at the IHL

umpires event planned for August and suggested it becomes a standard occurrence. This was agreed.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

7. Email from FIH – “State of the Game” audit

FIH request through all NAs. All active umpires of a particular age. WMcC noted we have very few under the age of in both 25 Men’s and Ladies. We need to be mindful of need to increase number in lower age groups for succession planning, particularly female umpires. Survey already completed and returned.

Hockey Ireland Communications

8. Hockey Ireland AGM

GH attended on behalf of IHA. Nothing to report for umpiring specifically.

9. Email from Inez Cooper re IHA Fixtures Calendar 2015/16

2015/16 IHA Fixtures Calendar was passed on to TG as Appointments Coordinator. IHUA gave a positive response and Inez has sent the calendar to IHA Board for approval. IHL fixtures are expected to be published within the next 10 days.

10. Email invite to Hockey Ireland Board Meeting

WMcC met Hockey Ireland Board during World League 2 event in Dublin. Umpiring was the first topic discussed and how Hockey Ireland and IHUA had previously been poles apart and went through some very tough times but now the relationship is much improved. The role of IHUA and the Umpire Working Group was discussed and our recent meeting with the Branch Umpiring Heads and how we were very much ahead of the game. Hockey Ireland see IHUA and the Umpire Working Group as the "gold standard" for everyone to strive to. They are happy with the direction of travel in umpiring and the progress re development that being made. €500 was requested and given towards the Young Umpires Seminar in conjunction with Eurohockey Club Champions at TRR to supplement to contributions from IHUA, Provinces and umpires themselves.

11. Email from Inez Cooper re Tex Solutions

Inez Cooper has asked us to look at feedback from umpires to clubs and vice versa that the new Tex System will cater for re an improving mechanism for all. Inez was advised that IHUA were aware of this capability and the cost of this was provided to her. It was agreed that this would be looked at a later date once the system was up and running, as there would be an additional cost in software purchase.

12. Inez Cooper re FIH Rules Opt-Out and Umpiring in IHL

IHUA agreed to adopt current international rules into our national league in full. Significant issue to be addressed is the lack of qualified Table Officials. Timing of matches will have to be managed by umpires which is made more difficult with the introduction of the new ‘40 second rule’ at penalty corners. Hockey Ireland have agreed to supply open mic radios to help umpires can manage the timings of games without a table clock. TOs will only do paperwork, suspensions and bench management. It was agreed it will be important for clubs, players and managers to understand the respective roles of TOs and umpires during IHL matches.

An IHL Clubs' Briefing will be held in Dublin on Sunday 6 September. IHUA have been asked to lead on umpiring, rules and management of IHL matches. TG or Ray O'Connor will be asked to give that briefing.

- **ACTION: TOM GOODE & RAY O'CONNOR**

TG agreed to put together a National Umpires Briefing for 2015/16. WMcC suggested a single briefing for all umpires in Ireland at all levels but an IHL Umpire Briefing be added as an appendix due to the introduction of different rules and management for those games. It is also intended to put the briefing on the website. WMcC added that it is very important Provinces all give the same briefing and do not introduce their own interpretations.

- **ACTION: TOM GOODE**

TG suggested all umpires get together to discuss the new rules and game management before the IHL Briefing. This could perhaps be combined with the required Fitness Test. All agreed this was an excellent idea. A provisional date of Saturday 29th August was suggested. It was also agreed it will be mandatory for all IHL umpires to attend. A mid-season meeting for all IHL umpires would also be considered again to combine with Fitness Testing.

- **ACTION: TOM GOODE & EAMONN McFERRAN**

Umpire Development Working Group

13. Richard Kendrick is chairing the UDWG supported by IHUA. Umpire recruitment documents and rules are now published and issued to clubs. WMcC is currently preparing "easy guide" for new umpire rules for national competitions and will forward to UDWG.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

14. No club umpires, nor indeed anyone, has signed up for an IHUA umpiring course yet. Important Hockey Ireland increase the marketing these courses and get them filled to create a pool of qualified umpires for the clubs.

15. Very important for timely communication of new umpires rules to all clubs in all Provinces so they understand their obligations. WMcC to put this, and all other relevant issues, through UDWG so that Hockey Ireland can issue communications to all its clubs. Proper marketing of this issue is very important. PM suggested IHUA contact Provincial Umpire Associations as well to ensure the message is passed out. WMcC preferred it was sent directly by Hockey Ireland so there is one method of dissemination.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

Sponsorship

16. WMcC contacted Hockey Ireland Head of Marketing, Alex Sherwood, regarding IHL sponsorship by EY (a multinational professional services company.) He was advised that at present no money from EY will be directed towards umpiring. IHUA advised it can source its own sponsors as long as there is no direct conflict with EY.

17. WMcC impressed the importance of IHUA finding sponsorship to help fund issues like clothing, video-cameras, development, etc. Money supplied to IHUA to purchase radios should not be considered as part of the IHL sponsorship deal as it was spent by Hockey Ireland to compensate for the absence of table officials.

18. Andrew Groves has suggested purchasing new kit supplied by Reece. PM brought samples of Zoti gear which Munster Umpires are seeking to purchase. PM advised lead time for new shirts can be 6-8 weeks so we need to order now if they are required by September. WMcC advised that umpire shirts, logo, etc. should stay as they are for now until proper sponsorship has been sourced. Andrew Groves will be advised to continue selling his current stock. For all future sponsorship deals, including any commitment to purchase branded kit, it was agreed IHUA must look for the best value for money in any procurement. WMcC to reply to Andrew Groves accordingly.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

19. Hockey Ireland suggested that umpires wear the new sponsor's logo on our left sleeve for all IHL matches but no sponsorship income would be provided. WMcC will discuss directly again with Alex Sherwood to find out if there is any possibility of EY providing sponsorship money for IHUA. Umpire sponsorship would provide the 'complete package' and umpires could be used as an on-pitch asset to sell the EY name (e.g. sponsorship on their backs similar to Belgian Hockey Umpires).

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

Tex Solutions – IHUA Website and Appointments System

20. Momentum towards implementing the new system has picked up significantly in last week or two. It is being set-up presently and WMcC hopes that testing will take place as soon as possible. WMcC explained that the systems needs more work to align it with current Irish national and provincial umpiring procedures. WMcC and TG will continue to work on setting it up for the new season. Ulster Umpires are implementing the same system with Gareth Herron leading on their implementation. WMcC has issued 'starter information requirements' to Leinster, Munster and Connacht.

21. WMcC introduced a discussion about the possibility of a new structure of 'Umpire Panels'. WMcC also said of the need for a Selection Policy which would provide a defined process and add much more transparency as to how appointments are made. Umpires would be placed into 'Panels' according to their assessment marks and this would be done by a separate Selection Panel (maybe twice a season). The Appointment Coordinator would then appoint from the Panels. All agreed this idea has real merit but will only work if enough umpire assessors and this must be the main focus for this season to increase the pool of people involved in supporting umpires. However the Panel proposal still needs more thought and liaison with Provincial Associations to work out how the Panels would operate in practice at a National and Provincial level. PM also said a Selection Policy was vital for IHUA going forward. PM suggested that by the end of 2015/16 season we have a policy proposal in place and a way forward on the introduction of Panels. This will allow the necessary time to have people able to conduct assessments. It would then be the Committee's intention to take that to the IHUA AGM in 2016 in time for implementation for 2016/17. All agreed.

22. WMcC confirmed in response to a question by GH that all costs for the Tex Solutions system will be met by Hockey Ireland. Costs for 'Who's The Umpire?' will cease immediately. TG to write to them to advise we will be stopping use of the system and thank them for their excellent services over the past number of years.

- **ACTION: TOM GOODE**

23. PM asked for email contacts to be set-up in the system for existing organizational email addresses so that all communication is sent through the system to the correct email address.
24. PM suggested the introduction of a registration system for umpires, with defined minimum coaching/assessment requirements, so that we know who all umpires are and their grading or level of ability. This is similar to how other sports manage their referees and officials. WMcC suggested we could have a system of Full and Associate members to differentiate between Panel umpires and Club umpires with varying rates of affiliation fee for each. All of these issues will be considered in future once the new system is live and the Umpire Pathway up and running.

Umpire Development

25. The recent Umpire Assessors Course and Young Umpires Development Workshop completed in April/May were both very successful. WMcC recorded his thanks to GC, TG and GJ for all their efforts plus Simon O'Connor and Ray O'Connor for their input. It was agreed to write to Tony Kelleher (UM for EuroHockey Trophy) to thank him for his help and input to the Young Umpires Development Workshop, which was really appreciated and received excellent feedback.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

26. TG suggested that we tell Provinces the names of approved and accredited Umpire Assessors and that reports from unapproved Assessors will not be accepted or considered. WMcC mentioned we need to run more courses next season to increase the pool of accredited Umpire Assessors and set criteria, including a Log Book, for how those assessors will receive their accredited. Effectively, all those that attended the assessor's course will have attained their assessor certificate but to become fully accredited assessors they must complete the set criteria. Re-accreditation would usually be required every 5 years. Set criteria to be agreed for release.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY & TOM GOODE**

27. It was agreed the next Umpire Assessors Course will be held in Belfast probably end of September/early October to coincide with an IHL match. A further course may be required later in the season, possibly after Christmas, in the South. To be reviewed following liaison with the Provinces.

28. Introductory Courses for Umpires, as listed on Hockey Ireland website, have been organized so that clubs can get their umpires qualified before the season starts. It is absolutely critical this is planned and done as soon as possible. WMcC will raise this with the UDWG (see 14. earlier). He appealed for volunteers to facilitate and host each course.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

29. In response to a question by EMcF, "Will all hockey in Ireland be played under the same rules?" TG replied that IHL is different, due to international variations, but all other hockey at all levels will be per FIH 2015 Rule Book with all new rules in place.

30. It was agreed Umpire Coach Courses will probably be pended until after Christmas due to the significant amount of other 'priority' work which is to be undertaken early season.

Finance

31. GH confirmed all umpire affiliation fees are fully up-to-date. Income and expenditure for recent umpire development events is still to be reconciled.
32. PM suggested IHUA should produce a budget/financial plan for the coming season. WMcC confirmed a Plan had been produced 2-3 years ago in conjunction with the National Umpiring Strategy. GH agreed to produce a plan.
 - **ACTION: GRAHAM HOHN**

Umpire Grading/Selection/Fitness

33. WMcC asked, "Are we to have a designated pool of IHL umpires?" He felt it is important to decide this early so we can issue radios, rules briefings, fitness test instructions, etc. TG is in favour of rotating IHL appointments throughout the season so some experienced umpires will still be available every week for their own Provincial League fixtures. We are likely to operate pools of up to 20 umpires for Men's and Ladies' IHL fixtures although it is likely the Ladies pool will be smaller, due to overall numbers.
34. There has been no progress since the AGM on appointing a Ladies' Appointment Coordinator. No likely or preferred candidate has come forward. It was agreed to approach Carol Metchette. EMcF has volunteered to take on the role should the position not be filled.
35. TG will appoint umpires to the forthcoming Ireland v Scotland u16 girls Test series in Belfast next weekend taking into account who has forthcoming European appointments and would be competent to umpire games at this level.
 - **ACTION: TOM GOODE**
36. Further appointments are required for the Under16 girls and boys Six Nations tournaments in Breda, Netherlands, in July. TG proposed Louise Daly (Leinster) and Kevin McGinley (Munster) as they attended the Young Umpires Development event last month. All agreed.
 - **ACTION: TOM GOODE**
37. A long discussion ensued on current EHF nominations. It was noted that neither Kieran Bolger nor Sarah Gray completed a fitness test last year. It was unanimously agreed both Kieran and Sarah should not be nominated for the EHF list for 2015/16. In addition, it was noted that Kieran Bolger has not been an active umpire at national level (mens) for two seasons; EHF to be informed. Letters to be issued to both.
38. Kieran Bolger and Dan Clarke have been inactive at national level for the past two years but remain on the FIH International Umpire Panel. In Dan's case, he has been inactive due to injury. EMcF will speak to Dan to confirm if he is likely to umpire again and, if not, ask him to notify FIH that he has "retired" due to injury.
 - **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY & EAMONN McFERRAN**
39. The Committee recorded its thanks to Robert Johnston, Zenia Howe & Julie Beamish for stepping in at short notice to act as UMs for the recent Men's and Ladies' Junior Interprovincial Tournaments in Cork.

40. RJ submitted an application for Trainee FIH Umpire Manager. TG & WMcC will consider and forward to Hockey Ireland for national association endorsement.

- **ACTION: TOM GOODE & WARREN McCULLY**

Umpire Radios

41. Hockey Ireland have agreed to pay for umpire radios in the IHL. WMcC has tested a number of different types. There are pros and cons with each. It is recommended and subsequently agreed that IHUA purchase UmpireTalk radios as used by Hockey England.

42. PM suggested we appoint an “Equipment Officer” who deals with logistics and inventory and repairs of radios. Aisling Keogh will be asked to take on this role.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

43. Ten sets (20 radios) will be purchased immediately though it was accepted we will need more to cover all IHL umpires. Written agreement has been provided by Hockey Ireland for the initial 20 radios to include a commitment in year two to pay for additional radios. WMcC advised that the headsets supplied with the radio are quite basic but there are better types available. Suggested that umpires could purchase their own headset at their own expense if they wanted (personal choice). WMcC proposed IHUA purchase a further five sets of radios this season at c.€1,400 then claim back the cost from IHA in year two (as agreed). This will ensure that we have enough radio coverage for all IHL matches.

- **ACTION: AISLING KEOGH**

44. It was agreed radios will be personal issue and will be mandatory for IHL and national competitions; radios cannot be used for other matches. At present, it was suggested that all IHL umpires will be asked to submit a refundable deposit of €30/£25 to cover damage and breakages. In the event a deposit is refused or not paid then that umpire will not be considered for national appointments. Deposit will be rebated once radio is returned safely.

45. All agreed it will be important to produce a “Terms & Conditions of Use” for umpire radios to explain the conditions set out above. Umpires should sign in/out.

- **ACTION: AISLING KEOGH**

Any Other Business

46. EMcF raised the issue of players urinating at pitch side. It was agreed this should be escalated to Hockey Ireland as a Code of Conduct issue. Umpires will be asked to report it so that it can be dealt with by Disciplinary Committee. This and all of the above issues will be notified to the Umpire Development Working Group.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

47. PM raised the serious issue of continued abuse towards umpires, especially the perception in Ladies’ hockey that umpires are constantly shouted at, and suggested use of Regional Development Officers to include umpiring in their regular coaching/training in clubs and schools. He further suggested the inauguration of a Fair Play Award to players/clubs for their good behaviour during national competitions. All agreed this was a good idea. WMcC will add this to the points to be raised with the UDWG. Noted that Hockey Ireland was to

issue a statement to clubs re umpire abuse but to date this has not happened – Hockey Ireland to be re-contacted.

- **ACTION: WARREN McCULLY**

Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was provisionally agreed for Saturday 29th August 2015 to coincide with the umpires briefing and fitness test (at a time and venue to be agreed).

WMcC closed by thanking everyone for their attendance and their perseverance in what had been a very long but hugely constructive meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed after just over 4 hours at 14:35.

Minutes prepared by
ROBERT JOHNSTON

30th June 2015

Summary of Agreed Actions

Para Ref	Action	Who
1.	Previous meeting and AGM minutes	WARREN McCULLY
6.	Congratulations to Gillian Garrett on award of FIH badge	WARREN McCULLY
11.	IHL Club's Briefing on 5/6 September	TOM GOODE & RAY O'CONNOR
11.	National Umpires Briefing for 2015/16	TOM GOODE
11.	UDWG to raise Code of Conduct issue with Hockey Ireland	WARREN McCULLY
11.	IHL Umpires Briefing and Fitness Test - 29/8/15	TOM GOODE & EAMONN McFERRAN
12.	Easy Reader Guide to new IHA Competition Rules on umpiring	WARREN McCULLY
14.	UDWG to ask Hockey Ireland to communicate new rules to clubs	WARREN McCULLY
18.	Andrew Groves to be contacted re shirts, logos, etc.	WARREN McCULLY
19.	Discuss IHL sponsorship for umpiring with Hockey Ireland	WARREN McCULLY
22.	Contact 'Who's The Umpire?'	TOM GOODE
25.	Thanks to Tony Kelleher re. Young Umpires Development Workshop	WARREN McCULLY
26.	Criteria for accreditation of Umpire Assessors	TOM GOODE & WARREN McCULLY
28.	UDWG to take forward Introductory Courses for Umpires	WARREN McCULLY
32.	Production of IHUA budget/financial plan	GRAHAM HOHN
35.	Appointments to Ireland v Scotland u16 Girls Test Series	TOM GOODE
36.	Appointments to u16 Six Nations Tournament in Netherlands	TOM GOODE
38.	Issue letters and speak to Dan Clarke and inform FIH/EHF	EAMONN McFERRAN & WARREN McCULLY
40.	Trainee FIH Umpire Manager application	TOM GOODE & WARREN McCULLY
42.	Appointment of AK as Equipment Officer	WARREN McCULLY
43.	Purchase of UmpireTalk radios and additional radios	AISLING KEOGH
45.	Terms & Conditions of Use for umpire radios	AISLING KEOGH
46.	UDWG to address issues of abuse towards umpires	WARREN McCULLY