

MRHA Men's Hockey League – December Newsletter

Now we are in to our mid-season break and, following our latest League Committee Meeting, it's time for a few comments on the season to date.

Red/Yellow card Review/Behaviour

Just a couple of teams received warning about averaging over 1 yellow card in the first 7 games of the season, but there is still a worrying increase of red cards, the majority of these were offered violence or abuse to umpires. The League also received several concerns regarding bad language and aggressive play during games. If not handled by the issuing of cards by the umpires at the time, then it should follow the normal reporting route i.e. Divisional Secretary, then Tier Secretary, then League Secretary. If it is felt there is sufficient independent verification, it could be managed with the raising of Disrepute Offence with England Hockey, as defined in the England Hockey Code of Ethics and Behaviour Guide, a copy of which is in the League Handbook.

Social Media

There have been several times this season where comments on Social Media, mainly Twitter, have been brought to the League's attention as being inappropriate. I'll like to remind and warn clubs that derogatory comment about clubs, players and umpires are totally unacceptable. The latter may be the subject of a Disrepute Offence. Please make your players/supporters aware of the seriousness of these posts. I would also point out that the League does not have any connections to accounts on Social Media, even if MRHA is used within their names, and does not endorse their content.

League Tables/Outstanding Results

I hope you are finding benefit of the Open League although as we could have anticipated there are a few teams that are either too strong or struggling in their division, please persevere. There have been a couple of casualties so far this season but hopefully no more. Some of these could affect the promotions/relegations as specified in the League Handbook and we'll try and let you know possible changes as soon as possible.

We've been fortunate with the weather so far and hope we don't get caught out by the longer December break and the weather deteriorating in the New Year. There are a couple of fixtures outstanding, lets make sure we get them arranged and completed.

Can I ask that you ensure all Venues/Times are loaded on the website and any re-arranged games are updated as soon as you are aware of the date. It saves the Divisional Secretary, and me, a lot of time chasing.

Umpiring Matters

I've received the usual number of complaints about club umpires, whilst I'm sure the Umpires' Associations would be more than happy to provide umpires to all League matches, I'm afraid they just don't have the numbers, over 300 hundred would be required every Saturday. They are currently covering as many as they can, and we are reliant on volunteer club umpires. As I've previously stated the League is unable to handle any complaints regarding umpires, especially as they are all volunteers, without whom there would not be any games. But I would remind all clubs

that all umpires should be Level 1 Qualified and Assessed with Registration numbers recorded on Team Sheets to confirm, please check Rule 17 if unsure.

Finally, some requests from the Umpires' Associations:

- Ensure all your club contact details are correct on the MRHUA website
- Ensure times on the MRHUA and MRHA League websites are the same.
- Remember to confirm with your appointed umpires by Wednesday, before the game at the latest.
- Ensure you have enough time booked to complete a delayed start of a game. If necessary, reduce the length of the game to ensure there is not a knock-on effect due to delays.

University Start Times

You may have noticed that this season we only re-scheduled University fixtures that fell before the start of their academic year and other games, that fell outside of term times, to be re-scheduled with the agreement of both teams.

From the coming season we propose a slight change and fixtures affected by both University and school term times will be treated equally.

As from 2019-2020 season we will not be specifying dates for out of term time University fixtures, but will allow these fixtures to be re-scheduled, with the agreement of both teams. We will continue to look to Tier 1 and 2 fixtures being completed on scheduled dates, but flexibility would be allowed for Tier 3 games. Rule 7 will still apply if any games are re-scheduled.

Management of Fines

Work is being undertaken to investigate the possibility of replacing the old MRHA paper-based fines system - as posted to Clubs by traditional mail -- with an online based system whereupon Divisional Secretaries can initiate / log a fine online within the MRHA website, which is then conveyed directly to the Club Secretary exclusively by email.

As details of the reason for, and status of, the fine will be held securely online the Club can itself then review and print the fine, if required, for their own records. When the fine is paid, the online status will be updated giving Clubs a record/receipt of the transaction.

More details will be provided to clubs when the work is signed off by the League Committee.

Finally, I hope you all enjoy your winter break and the festive season and look forward to the New Year.

Nick Haynes

MRHA Men's League Honorary Secretary – December 2018