

## Minutes of the EHUOPC Meeting Held on 30 September 2024

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### Attendees:

Liz Pelling (Chairman Elite) (LP), Dawn Bonner (Chairman Conference) (DB), Sean Edwards (NPUA Chair), Lee Barron (EHUSSC Chair), Debbie Garner (DG), Simon Gillett (SG), Charles Hallows (CH), Matt Harrison (MH – Support Strategy lead) Ann Hopkins (AH), Rob Jenkins (RJ), Louise Knipe (LK), Chris Peart (CP), Gary Stent (GS)

The Meetings opened at 19:30 on Monday, Sept 30 via Zoom conferencing.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

EHUOPC expressed its sadness following the death of Mark Jarvis. Mark was a stalwart of the committee and will be deeply missed by all the NPUA and extended hockey family. Condolences from around the hockey world were also noted and our deepest sympathies have been passed on to Mark's family.

### 2. Minutes of 14 May 2024

No matters arising not covered elsewhere in the meeting.

### 3. Updates from NPUA Exec/EHUSSC

A reminder of the new Performance Committees for season 2024/2025, and a welcome to Peter Mackintosh to his first OPC meeting.

#### Outdoor Performance Committees

Chair – Elite: Liz Pelling

Men's Premier & A\*: Hamish Jamson

Women's Premier & A\*: Louise Knipe

Men's A & B\*: Gary Stent

Women's A & B\*: Ann Hopkins

*Premier & Div 1 Appointments: Rob Jenkins*

Chair – Conferences & Men's B: Dawn Bonner

Women's B: Ann Hopkins

Men's C: Charles Hallows

Women's C: Debbie Garner

NPDP/Candidates: Simon Gillett

*Men's Conference Appointments: Peter Mackintosh*

*Women's Conference Appointments: Chris Peart*

*UPDATED since first circulated pre-season: Coach & Assessor Appointments (all divisions): Lee Barron*

#### Indoor Performance Committee

Chair: Lee Barron

Selectors: Annette Harvey, Jonathan Hull, Richard Kirk, Cathy Wright

#### Selection Strategy Committee

Chair: Lee Barron

Members: Dawn Bonner, Sean Edwards, Matt Harrison, Hamish Jamson, Louise Knipe, Liz Pelling

Approx 110 members attended NPUA Conference '24/25 took place on 7/8<sup>th</sup> September in Nottingham with excellent guest speakers and presentations. This included the 2024/25

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Umpire briefing that was shared by Exec the following week to EHL clubs. We were joined on the Sunday by EHO members attending its first conference.

Key Characteristics for Umpiring Support were rolled out at Conference and have now been incorporated into the feedback umpires give on support appointed to games.

NPUA Fitness tests are again being overseen by AJ Small, with details circulated to members for completion. Overall, a better response this season to complete by the deadline, but still may members who needed chasing. Appointments consider correct level of test for the games, with exceptions sought from SE if necessary.

The second NPUA fitness test is due by 31st December for Prem AND A-Star umpires, noting that all Prem and A-star INDOOR umpires need a watched test too. (indoor only umpires test deadline is October 31<sup>st</sup>).

Fitness on games: Members are also reminded that for games where coaching and assessment takes place, a mark is given for fitness (fit for purpose physically and mentally during the game) as per the NPUA's Key Characteristics of High Performing Umpires. This is marked as good (an umpire shows a good level of fitness for all the game), satisfactory (an umpire has a satisfactory level of fitness for most of the game – the feedback report will reflect where improvements are needed), poor (an umpire is often in a poor place for much of the game). A poor result will mean an umpire will be asked to re-run their fitness test, observed by a nominated watcher.

Documents have been circulated to members on the following topics. Anyone who did not receive them should contact their panel lead:

- NPUA 2024/25 Umpire Briefing
- Fitness Test Criteria
- EHL Regulations – 2024/25
- Information when an MO is not appointed
- New Discipline procedure and new Report Form
- EH Bad Weather Policy
- Support: Key Characteristics of High Performing Support
- Umpires: Key Characteristics of High Performing umpires

The next EHUSCC meeting is being held on October 23, 2024.

### International Update

OPC again expressed its pride and congratulations to the four NPUA members appointed to the 2024 Paris Olympics: Dan Barstow, Hannah Harrison, Rachel Williams and Margaret Hunnaball.

### Appointments:

EuroHockey Challenge II Men, Gibraltar: UM, Dawn Bonner

EuroHockey Challenge II Women, Poland: UM, Jackie Gibbs

EuroHockey 5s, Poland: UM: Matt Harrison, Umpires: Viv Carveth, Jon Goold

EuroHockey U21 Champs, Men/Women, Spain: Umpires: Clare Barwood (Neutral), Amar Chudasama, Zoe Hall

EuroHockey U21 II, Men, Switzerland: Umpires Jake Charles (Neutral), Kevin Roberts

EuroHockey U21 II, Men, Poland: UM Lee Barron,

EuroHockey U21 II, Women, Czechia: UM Dawn Bonner Umpires: Mia Dewing, Moli Smith

EuroHockey Champs Qualifier, Women, Scotland: Umpire – Zoe Hall

EuroHockey Champs Qualifier, Men, Austria: UM Lee Barron, Umpire – Sean Edwards

EuroHockey EHL KO16, Men, England Umpire: Rebecca Edwards

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### 4. **GMS Update**

Whilst long list of outstanding wishes for improvements to GMS still exists, meetings have taken place the new EH IT manager and various NPUA users to move things forward **ACTION: Ongoing by EH/WTU/ NPUA Webmaster**

### 5. **Coaching & Assessing Update**

OPC thanked support members for their patience with appointments whilst a new Support appointments co-ordinator was sourced. Also, thanks expressed to Matt Harrison for his help in appointing the first few weeks following the very sad new of Mark's passing.

Going forward, Lee Barron will be the Support appointer, the point of contact for the Support team, and liaison with the OPC Panel leads to ensure umpire development needs are met. Matt Harrison will continue to be the Support developer, working on strategy and the L3 Support awards for coaches, assessors and umpire managers, and will continue in his role as UM appointer, and with the development of the Support group.

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In the first two weeks of the season, following assessment, we have added the following to the support team:

Rob Brownbridge – Assessor  
Keely Dunn – Assessor and Coach  
Ann Hopkins – Assessor

Support lists were reviewed by EHUSSC and were updated to reflect those currently taking appointments.

### 6. **Appointments Update – RJ/CP/CB/LP/DH**

Appointers discussed the start of season.

Dates for members to enter availability and publishing dates were shared at conference and subsequently by panel leads. They are listed below:

Availability dates needed at least 4 weeks ahead of publishing. Why?

- Trying to publish three weeks before first game of batch (hence fitness window is in mid-August for completion)
- Helps areas, especially where area reserves are needed
- Two weeks needed to make appointments & cross check
  - First week = Prem and Div 1
  - Second week - Conference
- Leagues are staggered – sometimes only Prem, or Div1/Conference
- Support appointments follow umpires to allow for cross checking and development needs
- Publish dates are our best estimate
- The drafts are an intricate jigsaw puzzle. If members change availability between submission date and publishing, please advise the appropriate appointer. **ACTION: All members (but please try not to change!)**

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### 2024

#### **BATCH 1**

Publish By September 4th: ✓ (Sept 21/22, 28/29)

#### **BATCH 2**

Publish By September 17th: ✓ (Oct 5/6, 12,13, 19,20, 26-Prem only)

(Based on availability already in system)

#### **BATCH 3**

Availability needed by September 17th

Publish By 15<sup>th</sup> October: (Nov 2/3, 9,10, 16,17, 23/24, 30/1-Div 1 & conf only)

### 2025

**BATCH 4** – Feb Matches - (note Div 1 and Conference matches only)

Your Availability needed by December 20th

Publish By 15th January -- (Feb 1/2, 8/9, 15/16, 22/23)

**BATCH 5** – March Matches (Note: Premier matches only)

Your availability needed by January 11th

Publish By February 8th -- Five weeks of Phase 2 Premier (Mar 1/2, 8/9, 15/16, 22/23, 29)

**BATCH 6** – weekly for March Matches - (note Div 1 and Conference matches only)

Your Availability needed by February 14th

Publish For March = 4x week by week - Publish by Tuesday evening each week (Mar 1/2, 8/9, 15/16, 22/23)

**BATCH 7** - Phase 3 Prem published weekly for April

Your Availability needed by March 20th

Publish For April = 3x week by week - Publish by Tuesday evening each week (Apr 5, 12, 26)

The BUCs season continues to be appointed by Julian Warburton whilst NYUPL is administered and appointed by Mason Wright (including junior international training games).

## **7. Panel discussion (all):**

As a reminder to members, EHUOPC noted that when measuring performance for panel promotions, marks from prior seasons also form part of the overall consideration. The guidance for A star, is that two marks of 9 or 10 on Prem games is needed for promotion consideration and usually 'within' a season. Final ratification of promotion based on continuously high performance is at the discretion of EHUOPC. Membership on both A star and B star panels is over a maximum of two full seasons.

Movement between panels - it was acknowledged that there needs to be more fluidity to enable progression for those performing well, and those who do not, especially on the star panels. The marking system has clarity around the bands required, and should be referred to by umpires, as well as assessors regularly. Outside of the marking system, EHUOPC has authority from NPUA Executive to move umpires between panels and may, from time to time, make changes outside the bands, meaning that a mark 'in-panel' may not be enough to remain.

A reminder to members that active Premier or A star panel, on the panel at the Christmas break, need to have completed a second fitness test to Premier level, one of which needs to be in person. Those without two fitness tests will not be appointed to Premier League matches and will be moved to the A panel.

Exceptions to the above notes are in the gift of EHUOPC.

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### **Taking a Break from Umpiring (Extract from the 2024/25 Fitness test policy)**

Annual assessment is all about maintaining standards for elite national level umpiring. If an umpire takes a break, it is essential to NPUA that when they return to umpiring, they are fit to do so.

If a member has, for whatever reason, taken a break from umpiring (lasting longer than the current season) they will need to demonstrate their fitness and be re-assessed when they resume umpiring.

It should not be automatically assumed that the member would return to the panel they were on at the start of the absence, particularly if that absence was fitness related.

Those members who are inactive due to injury or a failed fitness test will continue to fall under the responsibility of their original panel lead, this will continue until such time as they return to umpiring or fall into the long-term break described below.

For clarity, and subject to the discretion of the Performance Committee to consider individual circumstances, the following will apply:

- Short-term break (within the current season having passed a fitness test at the start of the season) - return to existing panel, no assessment required (although a fitness test may be required at the discretion of the panel lead)
- Medium-term break (within the current season plus the following season) - fitness test required, then assessed and returned to the C panel (outdoor) or B panel (indoor), with Indoor / Outdoor Performance Committee discretion to reinstate at any panel following the initial assessment. Such a decision can be agreed by the relevant Performance Committee off-cycle from their formal meeting schedule
- Long-term break (greater than the current season plus the following season) - umpire should undertake games in their Area, pass the NPUA fitness test for a candidate, and then be re-nominated by their Area as a candidate

### **Milestones:**

#### **Congratulations to the following members on milestone matches:**

##### **Umpires:**

Sean Edwards – 200

##### **Panel updates:**

All panel leads provided comprehensive updates to panels during the meeting. Notable highlights are below.

As per 'taking a break' above:

Umpires who have not umpired in the NPUA league programme for 12 months will be moved to the reserve panel. Return to 'old' panel possible subject to performance, with fitness test for the panel and following assessment on an appropriate game.

Reserve umpires (and umpire support) who have not taken NPUA appointments for 18 months will be removed from NPUA panels. Return to NPUA umpiring is possible with Area nominations.

Umpires without appropriate fitness tests for panels will be moved to appropriate panel for test or to reserves. Return to 'old' panel is possible if the correct level test is achieved with an appropriate mark for the panel.

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**ACTION: Panel leads to notify umpires of changes not previously communicated**

### **Men's Panels**

**a) Premier / A\* – HJ**

No changes

**b) A Panel / B\* – GS**

Ady Green and Pete Hammond have retired from umpiring and are thanked for their long service and commitment to NPUA.

With many Men's Div 1 games now on Saturday as well as Sunday, umpires need to make themselves available for both for best opportunities.

**c) B Panel – DB**

Peter Mackintosh is moved to men's B star panel

Mark Davidson is taking a break from umpiring and is moved to the reserve panel.  
Gregor Hofstede has returned to Holland. We wish him well for his umpiring there.

**d) C Panel CH**

Adam Fleming is moved to men's B panel

David Eggleton is returned to Men's C panel

Chris Blogg has retired from umpiring and is thanked for his work with Appointing and umpiring. We wish him well.

### **Women's Panels**

**a) Premier/A\* – LK**

Jane Hallett has moved to the A panel.

Helen Sargeant retired from umpiring in the summer and is thanked for her long service. She remains an active member of NPUA as a coach candidate.

**b) A & B \* Panel -AH**

No changes

**c) B Panel – AH**

No changes

**d) C Panel – DG**

Sam Ransley retired from umpiring for NPUA during the summer to pursue a coaching pathway for an EHL club. He is thanked for his service and especially for the numerous times he doubled up.

### **GROUPS:**

**e) NPDP / Candidate**

Following assessments:

Abby MacCarthy is added to the Women's A star panel and Neil Johnson is added to Women's B panel.

Will Holmes passed his L3 assessments and is moved to the men's B panel.

Richard Perry passed his L3 assessments and is moved to the men's C panel.

**a) NYUPL**

A paper regarding NYUPL strategy is being prepared for review by EHUSCC – **ACTION: Mason Wright**

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### **b) NPUA /AREA RESERVES**

Jade Bloomfield and Jon McCall are returned to men's B panel and David Eggleton is returned to men's C panel.

Lucie Muliss has retired from umpiring and is moved off the NPUA panels with thanks for her service.

Area Reserves – once again, Areas have been supporting the National Programme with 15 appointments so far - and are thanked for their contributions.

### **8. AOB** None

### **9. Date of next meeting:**

Tuesday, 10 December 2024 via Zoom

The meeting Closed at 21:25pm. With thanks to Dawn Bonner for Zoom access