

## Minutes of the EHUOPC Meeting Held on 10 December 2024

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### Attendees:

Liz Pelling (Chairman Elite) (LP), Dawn Bonner (Chairman Conference) (DB), Sean Edwards (NPUA Chair), Debbie Garner (DG), Simon Gillett (SG), Charles Hallows (CH), 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

Lee Barron and Matt Harrison due to EHUIPC clash

### 2. Minutes of 30 Sept 2024

No matters arising not covered elsewhere in the meeting.

### 3. Updates from NPUA Exec/EHUSSC

#### NPUA Exec Update: SE

SE updated OPC on NPUA business.

Members will have received noticed that the NPUA Conference will be held on August 30/31<sup>st</sup> in 2025. Areas have also been notified to aid planning their start of season events.

This is the time of year that many members make their first claim for travel expenses and, following a few queries, are reminded that the membership subscription for the 2024/25 season is taken from expenses.

Fitness Policy Reminder:

Second fitness test for Prem and A-star umpires due by 31<sup>st</sup> December, with some umpires still needing to do an in-person test. AJ Small is co-ordinating for NPUA Exec.

#### EHUSSC Update:

One meeting has taken place with a follow up due prior to the Christmas break. The group is looking at areas such as NPUA panel structure, including Umpire Support, grading of umpires, feedback process for US (now in place on GMS), and International co-ordination.

#### International Update – HJ/LK:

Congratulations to Max Davidson and Tanja Sargeant who have been added to the EuroHockey Umpires4Europe (U4E) programme, and to Sam Church who has graduated to the EuroHockey Umpire Development Panel (UDP).

It was noted that NPUA International umpires had completed tests as required, and that FIH will move people off panels and appointments if the appropriate test is not submitted.

Euro Hockey appointments for summer tournaments are expected soon.

### 4. GMS Update - MH

Meeting with Tom Allen from EH held in October, facilitated by DB. Many items discussed with a follow up meeting planned early in the New Year. **ACTION: Ongoing by EH/WTU/ MH as NPUA Webmaster / SE / LP**

### 5. Umpire Support: Coaching & Assessing Update

A verbal update was received:

Number of assessments - 139

Number of Coachings – 69

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Number of US assessments – 4

US WhatsApp working well for news and updates.

Sean Edwards and Robert Brownbridge are now a L3 Umpire Assessors

Two targeted development groups have taken place, with further to be actioned in other geographical location post Indoor:

Oct 26th at EG for a targeted group of high-potential umpires. A similar version up North later in the season. **ACTION: LP to follow up for next opportunity once fixtures known.**

A coaching session at Sevenoaks for some south based umpire support was led by Louise Knipe, assisted by Jackie Gibbs and Margaret Hunnaball on November 9<sup>th</sup>. Similar opportunity to be looked into for Midlands/North based support **ACTION: MH to look at opportunities where multiple games played**

Umpire Support members are reminded to inform Dawn Bonner and Liz Pelling of the following on the day of the games watched (can we via text or WhatsApp) **ACTION: All Umpire Support members**

- a) Assessors to inform marks given
- b) Assessors and coaches to inform if a mark of poor is given for fitness so appropriate action can be taken according to the NPUA fitness policy

Umpires are reminded to complete the feedback on GMS for their coach / assessors following each appointment to aid the development process for US **ACTION: Umpire members**

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

CP/PM/DB and RJ provided a full report for the first half of the season, where despite challenges of storms, flu bugs, and Masters Hockey (well done to all who represented in SA and NZ), games were all covered. Thanks to members who doubled up, switched to Saturday games, and to Mark Everard for covering appointments for RJ during masters.

Rob Jenkins and Chris Peart will be retiring at the end of the current season as appointments co-ordinators. Job descriptions will be issued for expressions of interest soon **ACTION: SE/NPUA Exec**

Reminder: Dates for members to enter availability and publishing dates for 2025 are listed below:

#### **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***

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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):**

See Appendix for selection strategy, fitness notes and taking a break from umpiring.

#### **Milestones:**

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

##### **Umpires:**

Rob Jenkins – 600  
Nick Lockhart – 300  
Neil Smith – 300  
Martin Twist – 300  
Nick James – 300  
Sean Edwards – 200  
David Monger – 200  
Julian Warburton - 200  
Johnny Downer 100  
Chris Duerden – 100

#### **Panel updates:**

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

As per 'taking a break' in the appendix:

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.

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

#### **Men's Panels**

##### **a) Premier / A\* – HJ**

Mark Everard has retired from umpiring and is thanks for his enormous contribution to NPUA and umpiring in England. Mark remains active as a coach and assessor for NPUA.

##### **b) A Panel / B\* – GS**

Sam Church is moved to men's A star  
Alex Bandurak is moved to men's A panel  
Arevinth Sarma is moved to B panel

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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**

DB held a meeting with the Conference group to discuss the first half of the season. Feedback /actions are contained in various sections of the minutes.

Clare Barwood, Max Davidson, Jon McCall, Mike McCartney, Dougal Perfitt, Josh Perry and Matt Pilgrim and Harry Raffan are moved to men's B star panel  
Adam Genega is moved to reserve

d) **C Panel CH**

John Beckett, McKenzie Brailsford, David Eggleton, Paul Godfrey, Graham Morrison and Phil O'Hagan are moved to men's B panel

### Women's Panels

a) **Premier/A\* – LK**

Pritpal Sihota has retired from umpiring Women's Premier and is moved to the A panel

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

Sophie Parker is moved to women's A star  
Stuart Freeman, Steve Peruzza and Tanja Sargeant are moved to women's A panel

c) **B Panel – AH**

Lewis Gibson is moved to women's A panel  
Michael McCartney is moved to women's B star panel

d) **C Panel – DG**

Paul Masterson and Pete Tovey are moved to women's B Panel.  
Katherine Abbie is move to reserve panel

### **GROUPS:**

a) **NPDP / Candidates - SG**

A total of 14 candidate assessments have taken place, bring the total for 2024/25 season to 22.

Following assessments, **Max Davidson** is added to Women's B star panel, **Dan Carter**, **David Eggleton**, **Ben Garrod** and **Michael McCartney**, are added to Women's B panel; **Karen Fynn** is added to men's B panel, **Jason Sign** added to Men's C panel.

Will Holmes and **David Halkyard** passed their L3 assessments and are added to the men's B panel.

**Harry Jarvis**, **Stephen Limbert-Mason**, **Gareth Hinds**, **Sam Howard** and **Rob Moore** passed their L3 assessments and are added to the men's C panel.

**Paul Reeves** and **George Deaves** passed their L3 assessments and are added to the women's C panel.

A request to areas /NYUPL has been sent requesting any new NPDP/candidate nominations to be in by the December 20th. **ACTIONED by SG**

b) **NYUPL**

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

### c) NPUA /AREA RESERVES

Reserves: The following have not umpired in the National Programme for 18 months and are moved off NPUA panels: Toni-Lee Lambert, Bruce Bale, Simon Carr, James Freeman

Area Reserves – once again, Areas have been supporting the National Programme with 57 appointments so far - and are thanked for their contributions.

Area Reserves	Women's	Men's
Y&NE	15	
NW	10	
Mids	7	
East	7	
SC	6	
SE	3	
London	7	
West	1	1
TOTAL	56	1

### 8. AOB

### 9. Date of next meeting:

18 March, 2025 via Zoom at 7:30pm

The meeting Closed at 21:40pm. With thanks to Dawn Bonner for Zoom access

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Appendix:

### **Selection strategy, fitness notes and taking a break from umpiring**

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.

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 on an assessment will mean an umpire will be asked to re-run their fitness test within a two week time-frame, observed by a nominated watcher. A poor result on a coaching will result in an assessment.

Exceptions to the above notes are in the gift of EHUOPC, with fitness exemptions the gift of NPUA Executive.

### **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.

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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