



NPUA Fitness Policy – 2026/27 Season

Fitness & Athleticism is one of NPUA's key characteristics of high-performing umpires. There is much research about the importance of suitable fitness levels to an official's performance – both in terms of the physical, and cognitive benefits that it brings to performance. It is therefore crucial that NPUA umpires have an acceptable level of fitness to perform at the highest level.

All members wishing to umpire in the National Programme and retain active Level 3 status must complete a fitness test within the timeframe set by the NPUA Executive Committee. Without a valid fitness test, members will not be considered for appointments in the national programme.

Outdoor Programme

Window 1 – 1st July 2026 to 25th August 2026

Window 2 – 1st November 2026 to 18th January 2027

N1, N2 and HPP – Umpires must complete a fitness test to the required standard in both test windows. Window 1 must be an in-person test, overseen by an approved watcher. Window 2 can be either an in-person or online Strava test.

N3 and N4 – Umpires must complete a fitness test to the required standard in window 1. This can be either an in-person test, overseen by an approved watcher, or an online Strava test. Umpires may consider completing a 2nd test prior to being watched during the season to be eligible for promotion to N1, N2 or HPP.

FIH – Umpires on an International panel who are required to complete fitness tests in the July and November FIH windows will be able to submit these results for NPUA windows 1 and 2 respectively.

To be eligible for promotion to a higher panel, an umpire must have passed a fitness test to the level required for the higher panel prior to being watched umpiring by an umpire support person. We therefore strongly encourage members to complete a fitness test to the highest level they can achieve, rather than the minimum requirement for their current panel. This includes the need to have completed an in-person test with an approved watcher in window 1, to be eligible for promotion to N1, N2 or HPP.

Any member who has not achieved the level required for their panel by the date the window closes, will be immediately moved to the panel for which their test is valid. Any umpire who has not completed any test by the date the window closes will be immediately moved to the reserve panel.

Fitness test window – Indoor Programme

Window 1 – 1st July 2026 to 16th November 2026

Members who operate in both the outdoor and indoor programme for NPUA do not need to complete an additional fitness test for the indoor programme. The later deadline of 16th November for the indoor programme is only relevant for members who umpire in the indoor programme only, or whose panel within the indoor programme has a higher fitness requirement than their outdoor panel.



Fitness exemptions or alterations

In some circumstances such as injury, disability or pregnancy, members can request an alteration to the fitness deadline or test level required. These requests should be sent to NPUA Fitness Coordinator AJ Small (ajsmallnz@gmail.com) and Chairman Sean Edwards (chair@npua.co.uk) and will be treated on a confidential basis. Depending on the circumstances, it may also be appropriate to keep your panel selector informed.

Fitness assessment on matches

When umpires are watched during the season, the Umpire Support will record their view of the umpire's fitness on the feedback form, selecting from: Good, Satisfactory, and Poor. If an umpire's fitness is assessed as poor, an in-person test will be required within two weeks of the report being submitted. During this period, the Outdoor Performance Committee reserves the right to remove the umpire from future appointments, at the request of the NPUA Chair.

Fitness testing for English International Umpires

All umpires nominated by England to the EuroHockey umpire lists, including all FIH umpires, must complete fitness tests in line with the FIH standards. All international umpires are expected to be aware of the requirements for FIH fitness tests as outlined on the FIH website, and ensure that tests are completed within the required windows, with the correct process followed.

Approved watchers for international fitness tests are active FIH Umpire Managers, active FIH technical officials, members of the NPUA Selection Strategy Committee, and members of the NPUA Executive Committee. Additional watchers may be approved on a case by case basis – requests should be sent to NPUA Fitness Coordinator AJ Small (ajsmallnz@gmail.com) and Chairman Sean Edwards (chair@npua.co.uk).



Appendix 1 – Fitness test levels

The fitness test level required is based on the gender of the umpire, and their age on the date that the test is completed.

Female umpires

Test type	Panel	Age < 45	Age 45 & over
Beep	N1, N2 & HPP	Level 8	Level 7
	N3	Level 7	Level 6
	N4 & Candidates	Level 6.5	Level 5.5
Yo-Yo	N1, N2 & HPP	1,120m	1,000m
	N3	1,000m	880m
	N4 & Candidates	880m	760m
Cooper	N1, N2 & HPP	2,000m	1,850m
	N3	1,800m	1,650m
	N4 & Candidates	1,700m	1,550m

Male umpires

Test type	Panel	Age < 45	Age 45 & over
Beep	N1, N2 & HPP	Level 9	Level 8
	N3	Level 8	Level 7
	N4 & Candidates	Level 7.5	Level 6.5
Yo-Yo	N1, N2 & HPP	1,640m	1,440m
	N3	1,440m	1,240m
	N4 & Candidates	1,240m	1,040m
Cooper	N1, N2 & HPP	2,200m	2,000m
	N3	2,000m	1,800m
	N4 & Candidates	1,900m	1,700m



Appendix 2 – Procedure for an in-person test with approved watcher

Whilst online Strava tests are permissible for some members, NPUA's preference is for fitness tests to be completed in-person. Not only does this maintain the integrity and credibility of our fitness testing programme, but it also enables members to complete fitness tests alongside colleagues, and benefit from the collaborative encouragement that this brings.

Whilst it is the responsibility of each individual umpire to ensure they have completed a fitness test as outlined in this policy, NPUA will also work to arrange suitable, in-person fitness test events around the country during the fitness test windows.

All in-person tests must be overseen by an approved watcher:

- Member of NPUA Executive Committee
- Active NPUA Umpire Support
- FIH Umpire Manager or FIH Technical Official

In exceptional circumstances, an alternative watcher may be requested. An alternative watcher must be approved in advance of the test by NPUA Fitness Coordinator AJ Small (ajsmallnz@gmail.com) and Chairman Sean Edwards (chair@npua.co.uk). In no circumstances can a family member oversee an umpire's fitness test, even if they are on the approved list.

The integrity of our fitness testing is of real importance to NPUA. Watchers are reminded to ensure they oversee the measurement of 20m for beep and yo-yo tests, and that any umpire who fails to reach the line on or before the beep on three occasions fails the test.

Once the fitness test has been completed, the result should be sent to NPUA Fitness Coordinator AJ Small (ajsmallnz@gmail.com) in an email, sent by the approved watcher.

As per the NPUA expenses policy, travel expenses may be claimed for in-person fitness tests (both the umpire and the supervisor), by emailing NPUA Treasurer Richard Kirk (treasurer@npua.co.uk).

More information on the Yo-Yo test (Level 1) and a video demonstration can be found here:

<https://www.scienceforsport.com/yo-yo-intermittent-recovery-test-level-1/>

For the Yo-Yo test the following version must be used, this is the same version as used by the FIH, for FIH Umpires.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoRUOmm6XZY>

There is a paid Bleep test app available on the Apple Store, costing 99p, which can also be set-up to run both the Beep and Yo-Yo test, however the app does not contain the correct version of the Yo-Yo test ('Yo-Yo ITRL1'), so must not be used.





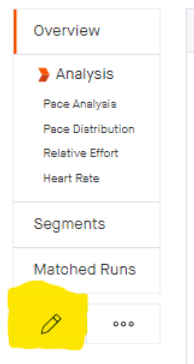
Appendix 3 – Requirements for an online Strava test

If using Strava, to record the Cooper test, then the following requirements need to be adhered to:

- The activity must be renamed to "NPUA Fitness Test 2026/27"
- The elapsed time must be 12:00 or under
- A map of the activity must be shown.
- The start and end of the activity can not be hidden
- The activity privacy must be Public or allow followers to see
- Over the run there must not be more than a 30 metre net elevation drop
- The umpire must be a member of the NPUA Strava Group

How to upload your Cooper test to NPUA Strava group

1. When you first upload an activity to Strava your activity is given a default title like "Morning/Afternoon/Evening Run". This should be edited via the Strava interface. On a PC this can be done by clicking on the pencil icon on the LHS of the activity:



while on the app you would tap to go into the activity, tap on the three buttons that appear at the top-right corner and then choose "Edit"



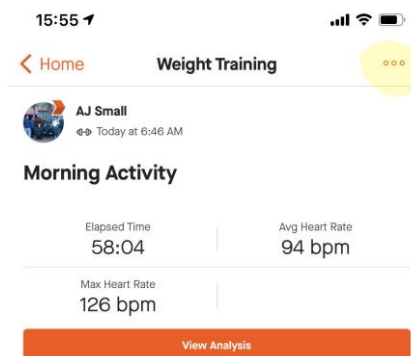
2. This brings up a menu where we can edit the name of the activity and you can add other

Edit Activity

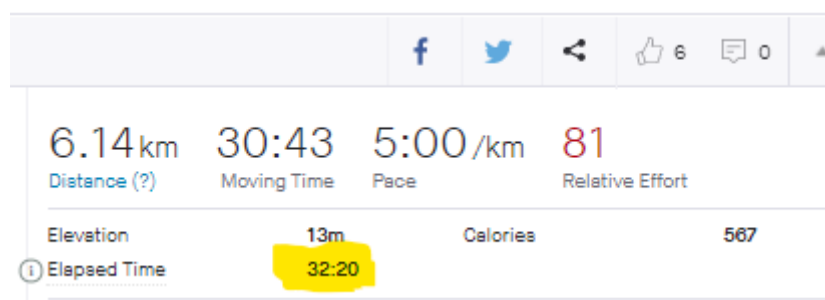
Title Evening Run	Sport Run
Description How did it go? Were you tired or rested? How was the weather?	Run Type
Perceived Exertion ⓘ How did that activity feel? <input type="range" value="Easy"/> Easy Moderate Max Effort ☐ Use instead of heart rate ⓘ	Tags Commute Treadmill
What is Perceived Exertion? Perceived Exertion is how hard your workout felt overall. Add it to your activities to track how your body is responding to your training. Perceived Exertion can also be used in place of heart rate data with subscription features, so you can better understand how your fitness is trending over time.	Shoes + New Shoes

comments if you so wish. The title should be amended to read "NPUA Fitness Test 2026/27":

On an iphone edit an activity can be done using the 3 dots in the top Right Hand corner



In terms of timing the critical time to look at on your activity is the Elapsed Time. This is NOT the headline time that is displayed on the activity in the activity feed, as that is the Moving Time for a normal run. This time has removed anytime where you have stood stationary for any period. For the Cooper test we need to look at the Elapsed time. When in the activity detail this can be seen in there as per below:





For the above activity the Elapsed Time is 32:20 and the moving time/headline time is 30:43. You can force the Elapsed Time to equal Moving time by changing the Run Type to be "Race". Once again, this can be done in the 'Edit Activity' menu.

3. For the Cooper test, the required distance needs to be achieved in an Elapsed Time that is no greater than 12 minutes. If your elapsed time is over 12 minutes then you can choose to "Crop" (again, in the 'Edit Activity' menu) the activity to bring the elapsed time back down to 12 minutes. Strava will remove any time, and associated distance completed, over the 12 minutes.
4. In order to validate the activity submissions the NPUA Strava Test Administrators need to access the activity details so they can validate the result. For this to happen you can either have your Privacy for activities set to "Public" or if you set it to "Followers" then you need to allow at least one of the NPUA Strava Test Administrators to follow you.
5. **Please note:**
 - a. **Any test showing the required distance not being achieved within 12 minutes, or any test that isn't cropped and the required distance is achieved in an elapsed time that is over 12 minutes, is considered a failed test.**
 - b. **If the activity is not renamed then it will not be used as your Fitness Test result.**
 - c. **There is NO need to post a screenshot in the NPUA Strava Club feed.** The main club feed is checked regularly (at least once, if not twice, a day).