

BUCS HOCKEY REGULATIONS

PUBLISHED | 22 SEPTEMBER 2025

HOC i The BUCS Hockey Championships shall be conducted in accordance with the following BUCS sport specific regulations, the BUCS general regulations, and the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Rules of Hockey.

HOC ii In the event that these regulations contradict the BUCS general regulations, these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

HOC iii In the event that these regulations contradict the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Rules of Hockey, these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

HOC iv The gender eligibility criteria for the BUCS Hockey Championships will be determined as per [REG 4.3](#).

HOC 1 There shall be separate Female and Open Team Championships. The programme for each Championships shall include leagues and knockout competitions as per BUCS general regulations, Appendix 1 ('BUCS Competition Offer and Associated BUCS Points') and Appendix 10 ('BUCS Promotion, Relegation and Knockout Information').

HOC 1.1 In both the Female and Open Team Championships, for Tiers 5 and below, BUCS reserves the right to operate a maximum of four leagues per Tier in a Conference (as opposed to the standard two) should entry levels permit. In such an instance, REG 8.3.1.2 is amended so that a Playing Entity will be permitted to have a maximum of three teams in the tier, regardless of playing conference.

HOC 2 Playing surface

HOC 2.1 All matches must be played on an appropriate synthetic turf pitch, in line with Hockey National Governing Body requirements. It is the responsibility of the first named (home) team when confirming the fixture (note REG 9.5) to advise the opposition team and all match officials of the playing surface to be used and on any footwear restrictions. At this same time, any alternative arrangements in the event of inclement weather shall also be communicated and teams must bring with them the appropriate footwear. Practice time on the surface to be used shall be offered to the visiting team prior to the official starting time.

HOC 2.2 At the current time, England Hockey does not support the use of any long pile turf pitch for any competitive hockey unless that specific pitch and surface has been approved by the FIH. All BUCS Hockey competitions will also adhere to this policy.

HOC 3 Match officials

HOC 3.1 Match officials should be appointed as per Appendix 5 ('BUCS Match Officials Requirements').

HOC 3.2 The NPUA/Scottish Hockey will appoint independent umpires to all National League matches. The costs incurred by these umpires will be passed onto the home institution/Playing Entity for each match.

HOC 3.3 For the National Vase Last 16, Quarter-Final and Semi-Final stages, BUCS and the NPUA/Scottish Hockey will work with the home institutions/Playing Entities to appoint independent umpires to all matches. The costs incurred by these umpires will be passed onto the home institution/Playing Entity for each match. The home institution/Playing Entity shall be responsible for the costs incurred by the umpires.

HOC 3.4 For the National Championship Quarter-Final and Semi-Final stages, BUCS and the NPUA/Scottish Hockey will work with the home institutions/Playing Entities to appoint independent umpires to all matches. The costs incurred by these umpires will be passed onto the home institution/Playing Entity for each match. The home institution/Playing Entity shall be responsible for the costs incurred by the umpires.

HOC 3.5 The NPUA/Scottish Hockey will appoint independent umpires to the National Championship, National Vase and National Trophy Finals. The costs incurred by these umpires will be met by BUCS.

HOC 3.6 For all National League and National Championship/Vase matches (except finals), the home institution/Playing Entity is expected to supply a Technical Official, as per Appendix 5 ('BUCS Match Officials Requirements'). The Technical Official will assist the umpires with their duties, but they are not required to hold a qualification nor be neutral. Failure to provide a Technical Official shall result in a £50.00 fine. Institutions/Playing Entities may not play under protest nor appeal a match result in the instance a Technical Official is not provided.

A [BUCS Hockey Technical Official Guide](#) has been produced to support those acting as a Technical Official.

HOC 4 Player's clothing and equipment

HOC 4.1 Shirt numbers Players shall wear on the back of their shirts numbers which shall not exceed the number 999. All numbers shall be no less than 8" (20cm) in height and shall contrast with the colour of the shirt. Taped numbers may only be used in an emergency. No two players in a team may wear the same number in a single match.

HOC 4.2 For all fixtures taking place in Scotland, regardless of the competition the fixture is part of, it is mandatory for all players defending a penalty corner to use head or face protection in line with what is permitted under rule 4.2 of the FIH Rules of Hockey. Any player in such a fixture not wearing head or face protection must return to the halfway line and participate from there. For all fixtures taking place in England and Wales, the wearing of head or face protection for players defending a penalty corner is not mandatory but is strongly recommended.

HOC 5 Team selection/Player movement

HOC 5.1 Goalkeepers Goalkeepers are permitted to move down one team from a team they have established normality for to play as a goalkeeper only in order to cover injury. Evidence that players are moving down to cover injury may be required. For example, a goalkeeper who has established normality for a 2nd Team may play for the 3rd Team, in the goalkeeper position only. However, teams should be aware that REG 11.1.2.1 still applies.

HOC 5.2 Senior International players and Great Britain Elite Development Programme Squad Players On league weeks when Senior International/GB EDP players who an institution would internally consider a "1st Team player" are not released for BUCS selection due to their international commitments (training or competition), as confirmed to BUCS by the Senior International/GB EDP Head Coaches, players who an institution would not internally consider a

"1st Team player" are able to "move up" to the 1st Team to cover the absence without it counting towards their 'normality' tally (as described in REG 11.1.2.2) under the following conditions:

HOC 5.2.1 The names of the "1st Team player(s)" unavailable due to Senior International/GB EDP commitments (training or competition) and the name(s) of the players 'playing up' as cover must be submitted via email to discipline@bucs.org.uk prior to the start of the relevant fixture to be eligible for normality exemption.

HOC 5.2.2 Failure to provide names in advance will mean that the fixture will count towards 'normality' for the player(s) 'playing up'.

HOC 5.2.3 This is in addition to, and does not supersede any other elements of, REG 11.1.

HOC 6 Substitutes A maximum of five substitutes may be named. All five substitutes may be used and as per the FIH Rules of Hockey there is no limit to the number of players who are permitted to be substituted at the same time or to the number of times any player is permitted to substitute or be substituted, i.e. rolling substitutions are permitted.

HOC 7 Minimum number of players for a fixture to start The minimum number of players per team required for a fixture to start will be seven.

HOC 8 Duration of play

HOC 8.1 Premier Tier leagues (National/North/South) and National Championship and National Vase knockout competitions All matches shall consist of four quarters of 17.5 minutes, an interval of two minutes between quarter one and two and between quarter three and quarter four, and a half-time interval of no more than ten minutes between quarter two and three. Teams shall change ends at half-time.

HOC 8.2 All other leagues and knockout competitions A match shall consist of two periods of 35 minutes and a half-time interval of no more than 10 minutes. Teams shall change ends at half-time.

HOC 9 Ties in knockout competition matches In the event of a tie after full-time, the outcome of the match shall be determined as follows:

HOC 9.1 National Championship/National Vase (All matches) and National Trophy (Final only) A shoot-out competition will take place under the following conditions:

HOC 9.1.1 Each team shall select five players to take and one player to defend the shoot-outs, excluding any players who have been permanently suspended from the game (Red Card). A player who has been warned (green card) or temporarily suspended (yellow card) may take part in the shoot-out competition even if the period of their suspension has not been completed at the end of the match. A player nominated to defend the shoot-outs can also be nominated to take a shoot-out. No substitutions/replacements are permitted during the shoot-out competition other than as specified below.

HOC 9.1.2 The Technical Delegate, or where there is no Technical Delegate, the Umpires, will specify the method of timing shoot-outs taking account of the facilities available and the need to control time accurately.

HOC 9.1.3 The Technical Delegate, or where there is no Technical Delegate, the Umpires, will specify the goal to be used.

HOC 9.1.4 A coin is tossed; the team which wins the toss has the choice to take or defend the first shoot-out.

HOC 9.1.5 All persons listed on the Team Sheet other than any players who have been permanently suspended from the game (Red Card) are permitted to enter the field of play on the half-way line.

HOC 9.1.6 The goalkeeper / defending player of the team taking a shoot-out shall wait on the back-line outside the circle.

HOC 9.1.7 A player taking or defending a shoot-out may enter the 23m area for that purpose.

HOC 9.1.8 Players taking a shoot-out and also defending the shoot-outs taken by opponents are allowed reasonable time to take off their protective equipment to take their shoot-out and subsequently to put back on their protective equipment.

HOC 9.1.9 Five players from each team take a shoot-out alternately against the goalkeeper / defending player of the other team making a total of 10 shoot-outs.

HOC 9.1.10 Taking a shoot-out:

- a. the goalkeeper / defending player starts on or behind the goal-line between the goal posts;
- b. the ball is placed on the nearest 23m line opposite the centre of the goal;
- c. an attacker stands outside the 23m area near the ball;
- d. the Umpire blows the whistle to start time;
- e. an official at the technical table starts the clock/the Umpire starts timing;
- f. the attacker and the goalkeeper / defending player may then move in any direction;
- g. the shoot-out is completed when:
 - i. Eight seconds has elapsed since the starting signal;
 - ii. a goal is scored;
 - iii. the attacker commits an offence;
 - iv. the goalkeeper / defending player commits an unintentional offence inside or outside the circle in which case the shoot-out is re-taken by the same player against the same goalkeeper / defending player;
 - v. the goalkeeper / defending player commits an intentional offence inside or outside the circle, in which case a penalty stroke is awarded and taken;
 - vi. the ball goes out of play over the back-line or side-line; this includes the goalkeeper / defending player intentionally playing the ball over the back-line.

HOC 9.1.11 If a penalty stroke is awarded as specified above, it can be taken and defended by any eligible player on the Team Sheet subject to the provisions of HOC 9.1.14, HOC 9.1.15 and HOC 9.1.16.

HOC 9.1.12 The team scoring the most goals (or ahead by more goals than the other team has untaken shoot-outs available) is the winner.

HOC 9.1.13 A player may be suspended by a yellow or red card but not by a green card during the shoot-out competition.

HOC 9.1.14 If during a shoot-out competition (including during any penalty stroke which is awarded) a player is suspended by a yellow or red card:

- a. that player takes no further part in that shoot-out competition and, unless a goalkeeper / defending player, cannot be replaced;
- b. the replacement for a suspended goalkeeper / defending player can only come from the five players of that team nominated to take part in the shoot-out competition:
 - i. the replacement goalkeeper / defending player is allowed reasonable time to put on protective equipment similar to that which the goalkeeper / defending player they are replacing was wearing;
 - ii. for taking their own shoot-out, this player is allowed reasonable time to take off their protective equipment to take their shoot-out and subsequently to put it on again.
- c. any shoot-out due to be taken by a suspended player is forfeited; any goals scored by this player before being suspended count as a goal.

HOC 9.1.15 If during a shoot-out competition, a defending goalkeeper / defending player is incapacitated:

- a. that goalkeeper / defending player may be replaced by another player from among the players listed on the Team Sheet, except as excluded under HOC 9.1 or unless suspended by an Umpire during the shoot-out competition;
- b. the replacement goalkeeper:
 - i. is allowed reasonable time to put on protective equipment similar to that which the incapacitated goalkeeper / defending player was wearing;
 - ii. if this replacement is also nominated to take a shoot-out, this player is allowed reasonable time to take off their protective equipment to take their shoot-out and subsequently to put it on again.

HOC 9.1.16 If during a shoot-out competition, an attacker is incapacitated, that attacker may be replaced by another player from among the players listed on the Team Sheet, except as excluded above or unless suspended by an Umpire during the shoot-out competition.

HOC 9.1.17 Any replaced player (defender or attacker) takes no further part in the shoot-out competition.

HOC 9.1.18 If an equal number of goals are scored after each team has taken five shoot-outs:

- a. a second series of five shoot-outs is taken with the same players, subject to the conditions specified in HOC 9.1;
- b. the sequence in which the attackers take the shoot-outs need not be the same as in the first series;
- c. the team whose player took the first shoot-out in a series defends the first shoot-out of the next series;
- d. when one team has scored or been awarded one more goal than the opposing team after each team has taken the same number of shoot-outs, not necessarily being all five shoot-outs, that team is the winner.

HOC 9.1.19 If an equal number of goals are scored after a second series of five shoot-outs, additional series of shoot-outs are taken with the same players subject to the conditions specified in HOC 9.1:

- a. the sequence in which the attackers take the shoot-outs need not be the same in any subsequent series;
- b. the team which starts each shoot-out series alternates for each series.

HOC 9.2 National Trophy (Except Final) and Conference Cup/Trophy/Shield (All matches) A series of penalty strokes will be taken under the following conditions:

HOC 9.2.1 The umpires shall together choose the goal to be used and the team captains shall toss a coin to decide which team shall take the first penalty stroke.

HOC 9.2.2 Five different players from each of the teams, excluding any players who have been permanently suspended from the game (Red Card), shall take a penalty stroke alternately against one and the same goalkeeper of the other team. Only if that goalkeeper is, in the opinion of the umpires, incapacitated through injury, or is suspended, shall the team be permitted to substitute the goalkeeper during the course of a particular series in the stroke competition.

HOC 9.2.3 The team that has been awarded the higher number of goals shall be the winner.

HOC 9.2.4 In the event of an equal number of goals having been awarded, another series of penalty strokes shall be taken under the above conditions and with the same five players (subject to any incapacitated player being replaced) but on a sudden death basis, that is the team having been awarded the most goals after an equal number of strokes have been taken shall be the winner. The sequence in which the players take the strokes for their team need not be the same as in the previous series. The team captain has freedom of choice at the time of each stroke as to which of the five nominated players will take the stroke although they must use all five nominated players per round.

HOC 9.2.5 The team that has taken the first penalty stroke of a series shall not take the first penalty stroke of the following series (if any).

HOC 10 Penalty corners Rule 13.3 of the FIH Rules of Hockey shall be varied as follows: Time is not stopped after a penalty corner is awarded (unless stopped by the umpire). If a suspended player's period of suspension ends during the taking of a penalty corner the player cannot return until the penalty corner has been completed or another penalty corner is awarded.

HOC 11 Team officials

HOC 11.1 For all fixtures, each team may have a maximum of five team officials who are permitted to be in the bench area as follows:

- Coach
- Assistant Coach
- Team Manager
- Up to two medical support staff, for example a team doctor and physiotherapist.

HOC 11.2 Teams must ensure that there is a clear delineation between, and segregation of, personnel approved to be in the bench area and any supporters/followers.

HOC 11.3 If a team has not brought a dedicated Team Manager, if they have a Coach present in the bench area, they shall be nominated as the Team Manager, who will be responsible for the conduct of all persons on the bench. If there is also an Assistant Coach present, they can be nominated instead of the Coach. In the absence of any coaches, this responsibility falls to the

Team Captain. The Team Manager should make themselves known to the Umpires or Technical Delegate prior to a match starting.

HOC 12 Personal penalties Rule 14 of the FIH Rules of Hockey shall be varied as follows:

HOC 12.1 Umpires shall have the authority to suspend any player or team official from the team bench area for indiscipline, whether temporarily (green or yellow card) or permanently (red card).

HOC 12.2 If a player or team official from the bench area receives a yellow card, a player must be removed from play for the duration of the suspension, and it must be the captain if they are on the field at the time.

HOC 12.3 If a player or team official from the bench area receives a red card, the team must withdraw a player from the field for the remainder of the match. The withdrawn player may continue to be substituted on and off the pitch during the suspension, but the team must play with one fewer player.

HOC 13 Additional Premier Tier/National Championship/National Vase specific requirements

HOC 13.1 Facilities should be of an appropriate quality and should comply with National Governing Body regulations for matches of this standard. To this effect, all matches should be played on a minimum of a sand-dressed pitch, and a water-based artificial surface where available. Pitches should provide appropriate dugouts for teams and officials.

HOC 13.2 Playing facilities must be booked for an appropriate length of time to allow for the full conclusion of the match. BUCS recommends that at least two hours of pitch time are booked (longer for knockout fixtures). Institutions/Playing Entities failing to book sufficient time will be considered to have defaulted on the match if for any reason there is insufficient time to bring the fixture to a conclusion.

HOC 13.3 If a match is to be played under lighting, then it is recommended that 350 lux should be the minimum – in line with FIH regulations. This will require the facility operator to declare their lighting levels and commit to some regular maintenance. Should a team wish to contest the level of lighting, they must do so prior to the match starting in order to ensure that they have grounds for an appeal should they so wish and must satisfy the Playing Under Protest requirements of REG 12.

HOC 13.4 Spectators are required to be kept away from the side of the pitch.

HOC 13.5 Additional Fixture Administration In addition to fulfilling REG 9.3.6/REG 9.3.6.4, for all National League matches, National Championship matches and National Vase matches (except finals), the first named (home) team shall update the England Hockey officiating Management System with all match details, to assist the National Programme Umpiring Association (NPUA) with officials' appointments. Failure to do so shall result in a £50.00 fine.

HOC 13.5.1 In addition to REG 9.3.6.1 through REG 9.3.6.4, any change(s) to the start time or venue at any stage once initial time and venue are confirmed should be updated on the England Hockey officiating Management System and confirmed in writing with the nominated NPUA representative by the first named (home) team, a minimum of 48 hours before the originally scheduled time of the fixture. Failure to do so shall result in a £100.00 fine, and the possibility umpires will not be appointed by the NPUA. Additionally, in cases where the fixture date is changed, as soon as this has been agreed (as per REG 9.2.1/REG 9.2.2) the fixture details on the nominated umpiring software should be updated accordingly.