Article 6 relating to the Ulster Hockey Umpire Panel has two aspects to the rule:

# Panel Umpires

All clubs with a 1st XI team playing senior hockey in the Men's EYHL, Premier or

Intermediate leagues and/or in the Ladies EYHL, Premier, or Senior 1 leagues MUST have

at least one graded umpire (minimum C panel standard) per 1st XI team, to be available to

take umpire appointments for the Ulster Umpire Men’s and/or Ladies’ panels EACH

Saturday during the season

All clubs with a 1st XI team playing senior hockey in the Men's EYHL, Premier or

Intermediate leagues and/or in the Ladies EYHL, Premier, or Senior 1 leagues MUST have

at least one graded umpire (minimum C panel standard) per 1st XI team, to be available to

take umpire appointments for the Ulster Umpire Men’s and/or Ladies’ panels EACH

Saturday during the season

All clubs with a 1st XI team playing senior hockey in the Men's EYHL, Premier or

Intermediate leagues and/or in the Ladies EYHL, Premier, or Senior 1 leagues MUST have

at least one graded umpire (minimum C panel standard) per 1st XI team, to be available to

take umpire appointments for the Ulster Umpire Men’s and/or Ladies’ panels EACH

Saturday during the season

All clubs with a 1st XI team playing Men’s EYHL, Premier and Intermediate League and/or Women’s EYHL, Premier and Senior 1 clubs **MUST** nominate at least 1 graded umpire to be available to the panel to officiate neutral appointments from the start of the season.

Nominated panel umpires MUST be a graded umpire (minimum Grade C or a Candidate Umpire waiting for assessment) and must be available to take umpire appointments for the Ulster Umpire Men’s or Ladies’ panels. Clubs must provide a nominated umpire every Saturday during the season to attain their mark towards compliance for that specific week.

Registration of Nominated Panel Umpires

On **31st May** each year Nominated Panel Umpires names for the completed season will be removed from each clubs list.

Each Men’s EYHL, Premier and Intermediate League and/or Women’s EYHL, Premier and Senior 1 club should notify the Ulster Umpires Executive Honorary Secretary at gredpath@lumenid.co.uk **NO LATER** than the **Midnight 31st August** in each year who their Nominated Panel Umpire/s will be for the incoming season.

Nomination requirements

(a) Names (including first names and surname)

(b) Umpire Registration Number

(c) Mobile phone number

(d) Email address

(e) Umpiring Panel being nominated to

(f) Club being nominated for

Where a breach of registration is confirmed, the appropriate sanction will be imposed on the club/s concerned.

Fines

Nominated Panel Umpire details received after 31st August - £100

From 1st September onward in each year normal Club Compliance Rules will be enforced from this date and sanctions will be calculated at the end of the season.

Panel Umpires Appointments

Panel Umpires will the appointed to Men’s & Women’s matches using the following competition structure:

**Men’s** **Women’s**

Kirk Cup Denman Shield

Premier League Premier League

Intermediate League Senior 1

Linden Cup Senior Cup

If there are not enough Panel Umpires available for the scheduled fixtures then umpires will not be appointed from the bottom competition upward using the following additional criteria:

* Both Clubs **DO NOT** provide umpires to their relevant Panel
* 1 Club **DOES** and 1 Club **DOES NOT** provide an umpire to their relevant Panel
* Both Clubs **UNABLE** to meet requirement to provide an umpire for that weekends appointments due to **UNAVAILABILITY**
* 1 Club’s Panel umpire **IS** available for appointment and 1 Club is **UNABLE** to meet requirement to provide an umpire for that weekends appointments due to **UNAVAILABILITY**
* Both Clubs **DO** provide an umpire to their relevant Panel

If unavailability leads to **NO** umpires being provided to any matches in the lowest competition and there is potential for matches in the next lowest competition having no umpires appointed to matches the same criteria as above will be used to prioritise appointments.

# Club Umpires

All Premier League, Intermediate League and Senior League 1st XI matches where a Panel Umpire is ***not*** provided ***must*** be umpired by Qualified Club Umpires.

Clubs ***must*** ensure that their appointed Club Umpire(s) has passed the Ulster Hockey Rules Test in the last 2 years (pre January 2021) AND have a valid Ulster Hockey Umpire Registration number. Club Umpires who have not passed a rules test pre January 2021 must complete the Online Rules Test and follow up Modules on the Hockey Ireland eLearning Hub.

# 2023–2024 Compliance Sanctions

In accordance with Article 6d, sanctions will be recommended to the Ulster Hockey Management Board according to the following framework for fines for the 2023-24 season.

# Panel Umpires: Premier, Intermediate & Senior 1 Clubs

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 85% & above | Complied – No sanction |
| 70 – 84% | Up to a £100 fine |
| 60 – 69% | Up to a £200 fine |
| 40 – 59% | Up to a £300 fine |
| 20 – 39% | Up to a £400 fine |
| 05 – 19% | Up to a £500 fine |
| 0 – 4% | Up to a £1,000 and/or Points Deduction |

NB: Points Deductions are an additional possible sanction (as agreed at the 2020 Ulster Hockey AGM).

Note: Ulster Hockey Management Board have asked Ulster Umpires to closely monitor clubs ’compliance with Article 6a. Should they detect higher levels of noncompliance than in previous seasons, the Ulster Hockey Management Board will consider increasing fines and points deductions.

There will be two review points during the season. At the First Review Point (December 2023), we will advise all Premier and Senior 1 clubs of their compliance to date. For those clubs who have not achieved **85%** compliance, they will be informed of the indicative fine that ***could*** be levied at the Second Review Point (Note: the level of fine could increase or decrease as it will be based on a club’s overall compliance during the season as at the Second Review Point). At the Second Review Point (April/May 2024) those clubs who have not achieved **85%** compliance Ulster Umpires will recommend an appropriate sanction to the Ulster Hockey Management Board. The Ulster Hockey Management Board will approve or amend the sanction in accordance with the above table and they will issue the ACTUAL fine. For those clubs who are repeat offenders there is the possibility of a Fine and Points Deduction. Clubs should expect that the maximum fine for each band will be levied, unless they can present compelling reasons why they failed to comply with Article 6. Throughout the season, Ulster Umpires will be regularly publishing compliance statistics on the umpire’s portal [(www.ulsterhockeyumpires.com).](http://www.ulsterhockeyumpires.com/) We would encourage clubs to regularly visit the site, view the statistics and if you have any queries please raise them with either Linda Coughlan (Ladies) or Neal Hermon (Men).

# Club Umpires (Senior 2 & 3 Clubs)

Ulster Umpires will not appoint neutral panel umpires to Senior 2 or Senior 3 matches. As mentioned, these clubs ***must*** ensure these matches are umpired by Registered Club Umpires – people who have passed the Ulster Hockey Rules Course (pre January 2021) and have been given a unique registration number. When completing match cards umpires ***must*** sign the card in the usual manner and also use their registration number. Please cc William.stewart0109@gmail.com when returning the cards. The Umpires Registration Secretary will be checking match cards for compliance. The following fines will be issued for non-compliance. Compliance will be monitored from the start of the season

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1st Offence | Warning letter – no fine |
| 2nd Offence | £25 fine |
| 3rd & all subsequent offences during the season | £50 fine |

As in the past, the Umpires Committee are happy to work with clubs to help you meet your obligations. We will be running seminars in the Autumn to explain the new IHUA rules course process. Our basic objective is to do everything that we can to help clubs meet their responsibilities; thereby avoiding fines; but we need the support and understanding of clubs as we cannot do this alone.

# Umpires Portal

The Ulster Hockey Umpires Portal [www.ulsterhockeyumpires.com i](http://www.ulsterhockeyumpires.com/)s a rich source of information for:

* Umpire appointments for your 1st XI matches (Premier, Intermediate & Senior 1)
* Umpire appointments for IHL, ISC, IJC, IHT and IHC matches
* The latest match details of Premier, Intermediate, Senior 1 and Irish fixtures
* News Items from the world of umpiring

In addition, each club has its own secure page on the portal, where information relating to forthcoming matches is displayed, fixture details, umpire appointments (including contact details); information related to the availability of your panel umpires (very handy if you want to manage your nominated umpire availability targets for 2023-24) and contact information relating to your club.

If you have not already done so, please ensure that someone from your club reviews and updates this information as soon as possible – particularly the contact details of your Match Secretary.

# Fixtures and Appointments

Ulster Hockey are responsible for entering the Fixture Information on Gameday. All Match Secretaries are responsible for informing the UH Fixture Secretaries (Alison Johnston /Jamie Shilliday) AND the appropriate Umpire Appointments Co-ordinators of any changes to date, time, venue or cancellation of the published match details via the relevant ‘Match Secretary – Umpires’ WhatsApp Group:

Ladies: Linda Coughlan Men: Neal Hermon

Match Secretaries should get into the habit of regularly checking their 1st XI fixture details by either logging on to the secure club page on the Umpires Portal or looking at the published fixtures and appointments for the week ahead.

The job of the Umpire Appointments Co-ordinators can be onerous. But it can be made much easier through careful planning and good communication by and with club Match Secretaries – that means advising the relevant Umpire Appointments Co-ordinators in good time, at least 5 – 7 days of any changes to a fixture, so there is sufficient time to advise the umpires or find a suitable replacement.

Failure to provide notice of fixture changes will result in the Umpiring Committee recommending to the

Ulster Hockey Management Board that your club is fined for failing to inform the Umpire Appointments Co-ordinators. Normally only the club Match Secretary should contact Umpire Appointments Coordinators.

# Pre-Season Club Tournaments/Fixtures

It is the responsibility of the Host Club to organise the payment of Travel Expenses / Subsistence with those Umpires who are attending any such event/match.

The Host Club must also ensure that the appropriate level of Insurance is in place to cover any potential incidents that may occur which could result in Litigation towards the Umpires concerned. If this is NOT in place then the Umpires may feel this is not a safe environment for them to participate.

# Competition Rule 15: Alignment with Article 6a & 6b

Panel Umpires: Where umpires have not been appointed to a Premier or Senior 1 match; or where one or both appointed umpires do not turn up, the match ***must*** still be played. Rule 15 explains how umpires should be appointed in such a scenario. Neither team can refuse to play because they do not like who will umpire or any adverse impact on their team.

It is the responsibility of the Club Match secretary to check the portal to see if an Umpire has been appointed to a fixture right up until the night before in the event of a late cry off. If no Umpire has been appointed, they should then arrange for a suitable Umpire to be provided.

Club Umpires: Where no team or only one team can provide a ‘Registered Umpire ’the match still ***must*** be played. Again Rule 15 explains how umpires should be appointed. In any scenario where a team has not provided a Registered umpire, it will be that club who will be fined.

When signing the card after the match, please ensure that the card is signed legibly and that an Umpire number is on the card, if the Umpire cannot be identified you will not be credited with having umpired the match.

Please ensure that for Premiership, Senior 1 or Intermediate league matches that no Umpire has been appointed that William.stewart0109@gmail.com is cc’d when returning the card.

# Contacting the Umpiring Committee

Ulster Hockey Umpires are managed by an Umpiring Committee which reports directly to the Ulster Hockey Management Board. If there are any umpiring issues or matters that you would like the committee to consider (except appointment issues) please contact the Umpiring Committee Honorary Secretary. George Redpath at gredpath@lumenid.co.uk