



# MINI HOCKEY

## Rules of the Game 2005



# Mini Hockey Rules 2005

## INTRODUCTION

Mini Hockey is a 7-a-side game played across half of a full sized hockey pitch. The small-sided teams and adapted playing areas ensure a type of involvement in the game that will provide children with enjoyment and success. Girls and boys can participate side by side in what is a high scoring, fast moving, fun game of hockey.

## THE RULES

The Rules of the game of Mini Hockey are printed on the pages that follow. They are easy to understand and apply. They have been simplified so as young players may be encouraged to gain a greater understanding by reading this book. Please encourage them to do so. Other than the Rules listed in this book, the Rules of Hockey (the 11-a-side games) apply to all Mini Hockey.

While it is appreciated that some young players are ready to play 11-a-side hockey before they are 13 years of age, a large number are still being introduced to the game at this stage and therefore, England Hockey recommends that small sided team games (i.e. 7 a-side) form the introductory part of a players development. The Mini Hockey format provides an ideal stepping stone for young players as they progress towards the full game of hockey.

## THE MINI HOCKEY PITCH

Dimensions:

Length 55m

Width 43m

Shooting circles radius of 14.63m

Penalty corner markers 10m from each goalpost on back-line

Corner markers 3m from corner of pitch on side-lines

Penalty stroke spot 5m from goal-line into pitch.

- Each 11 a-side (full size) hockey pitch can accommodate two Mini Hockey pitches
- The shooting circles and the goals are exactly the same as those used for the 11 a-side game
- The pitch markings are modified (there is a centre line in Mini Hockey but there are no 23m lines).

## **GOALS**

Width: 3.6 metres. It must be positioned against the outer edge of the back-line, in line with the centre of the pitch. (Goals are the same size as those used in the full game of hockey.)

## **BALLS**

For the Under 11 group matches, it is preferable to use a lighter ball than is used in the full game of hockey. We recommend a ball weighing 113 grams (4ozs.) The ball size is exactly the same. However, this recommendation does also depend on the standard of players. If they have been playing hockey for a period of time they may well be comfortable with a standard ball.

## **STICKS**

The stick shall be a standard regulation hockey stick. It shall have a flat face side and a rounded side. The ball may be played with the flat face side of the stick or the edge of the rounded side, on condition that the flat side is visible (i.e. not flat to the turf / pitch). It should be noted that playing the ball with the edge of the rounded side is always subject to dangerous play (i.e. it will be penalised by the umpires if it is measured to be dangerous or is leading to dangerous play).

(Coaches and teachers are asked to ensure that young players use a suitable length and weight of stick.)

Note:

The umpires shall forbid the use of any stick that does not comply with the Rules of Hockey.

## **TEAMS**

The game is played between two teams. They shall each have a maximum of ten players. Seven are permitted on the pitch at any one time. They are six field players and one goal-keeper. The remaining three players are substitutes. Every team must play with a goal-keeper. Kicking backs are not permitted in Mini Hockey.

Substitutions are allowed at any time, excepting following the award of a penalty corner, when only the defending goalkeeper may be substituted - if injured.

## **DURATION OF GAME**

The duration of the game is two halves (usually of 12 minutes each) with an interval (half-time) of not more than 5 minutes. For the National Mini Hockey Championships, the Under 11 group matches are 10 minutes each way and the Under 13 group matches are 12 minutes each way. Following half-time the two teams change ends.

## **CAPTAINS**

The Captain of each team tosses a coin for choice of ends or possession of the ball at the start of the game. Each Captain must wear an armband and is responsible for the conduct of all players in their team, including those on the bench - the substitutes.

## **EQUIPMENT**

No player shall wear any equipment that may be dangerous to the self or other players. This includes raised jewellery, baseball caps with a stiffened peak and / or any sharp object.

The use of proper footwear for the playing surface (trainers or turf shoes) and suitable warm clothing (track-suit) is encouraged.

It is **strongly recommended** that shin-protectors and mouth-guards are worn by all field players at **all** times, (inclusive of training sessions/games).

Note:

The umpires shall forbid the wearing of any equipment that does not comply with this Rule.

In the interest of safety, goalkeepers must wear full goal-keeping equipment including:

- Full helmet with throat guard
- Body protector (groin and chest areas)
- Hand protectors
- Leg protectors
- Feet protectors
- Abdominal guard or box

Note:

The umpires will not allow any team to play unless the goalkeeper is properly protected.

## **STARTING THE GAME**

The game is started with a push or a hit from the centre of the centre line. It follows the umpires whistle at the commencement of play in each half of the game and after a goal has been scored. Each team must be positioned in their own half of the pitch and the opposing players must be a minimum of 5 metres from the ball until the centre pass is played. The ball can be played forwards, backwards or sideways and must move a minimum of 1 metre before being played by a player of the same team.

## **SCORING A GOAL**

A goal is scored when the ball has been struck by, or deflected off, an attacker while it (the ball) is in the circle and crosses completely over the goal-line between the goal-posts and under the cross-bar.

## **BALL OUT OF PLAY**

### ***Over the side-line:***

When the ball passes completely over the side-line it shall be put into play along the ground in any direction by a hit or a push by an opponent of the player who last touched it. This is called a hit-in. Until the hit-in is taken, no opposition player shall be within 5 metres of the ball. If the hit-in is awarded on the side-line within 5 metres of the circle edge, all players except the taker must be a minimum of 5 metres from the ball until it is played.

***Over the back-line by an attacker:***

When the ball passes over the back-line off one of the attacking players and no goal is scored, the game is re-started with a hit to the defence which is taken level with the top of the shooting circle and opposite the place where it crossed over the back-line.

***Over the back-line by a defender:***

If the ball is accidentally played over the back-line by a defender and no goal is scored, the game is re-started with a corner to the attacking team. The corner is taken on the side-line, 3 metres from the corner of the pitch. No player, other than the taker, shall be within 5 metres of the ball until it is played.

***Deliberately over the back line by a defending player:***

If the ball is deliberately played over the back-line by a defending player, the game is re-started with a penalty corner to the attacking team. The penalty corner is taken on the back-line, 10 metres from the goal-post. No player, other than the taker, shall be within 5 metres of the ball until it is played.

**ROUGH OR DANGEROUS PLAY**

Rough or dangerous play shall not be allowed, nor any behaviour which in the opinion of the umpire, amounts to misconduct.

Note:

The umpires shall send any player who persists in breaking this Rule off the pitch.

**PLAYERS MUST NOT**

- Players must not intentionally use any part of their body to play the ball (except the hand to protect the self in a danger situation).
- Players must not play at any high ball with the stick held at above shoulder height unless they are attempting to prevent a goal from being scored (i.e. to defend a shot on goal).
- Goalkeepers are also permitted to use a high stick when defending a shot on goal. In both cases (i.e. field players and goalkeepers) it is essential that the stick is used safely and wisely.
- Players must not use the rounded side of the stick when playing the ball and when striking the ball, the stick must in no way cause danger, nor lead to dangerous play, or be intimidating to any opponent.
- Players must not play in any way that is dangerous.
- Players must not kick the ball.

(Note: It is not an offence if the ball hits a player's foot and the whistle should only be blown if the incident causes a total break-down in play and / or a disadvantage. The umpires shall be the sole judges.)

- Players must not obstruct by running between an opponent and the ball, thereby unfairly preventing the opponent from playing the ball. Neither must they use any part of their body or stick to obstruct a player.
- Players must not hold, charge, kick, shove, intentionally trip, or strike any player or umpire.

### **FREE HITS**

Free hits are to be taken close to where the offence occurred. The ball must be stationary at a free hit and it must move a minimum of 1 metre before being played by a member of the same team.

Until the free hit is taken, all opposition players must be a minimum of 5 metres from the ball and if the free hit is within 5 metres of the circle, all players except the taker must be a minimum of 5 metres from the ball.

If the taker accidentally misses the ball when attempting to take the free hit, it shall be taken again.

After taking the free hit, the taker shall not play the ball or remain within playing distance, until it has been touched or played by another player.

### **PENALTY CORNERS**

Penalty Corners are taken on the back-line on a marker that is 10 metres from each goal-post.

The players may choose which side of the goal to take the penalty corner.

The taker must have at least one foot off the pitch (behind the back-line).

All other attacking players must be outside the circle.

The 5 defending players must stand behind the back-line at least 5 metres from the ball. The remaining 2 defending players must be in the other shooting circle - at the opposite end of the pitch.

Before any shot can be made at the goal, the ball must first pass outside (beyond) the circle edge.

If the first shot at goal is a hit, then it must not cross the goal-line at above 460mm, (the height of the back-board) unless it takes a deflection off an attacker or a defender on the way.

No shot will be allowed if it is judged as dangerous to other field players.

If the ball passes beyond 5 metres of the circle edge, the PC restrictions (Rules) shall cease to apply.

Any penalty corner awarded immediately before half or full time shall be completed.

***A Penalty Corner shall be awarded for any one of the following reasons:***

- A defending player accidentally committing an offence inside the circle.
- A defending player deliberately committing an offence outside the circle, but within their own half of the pitch.
- A defending player deliberately playing the ball over their own back-line from anywhere on the pitch.
- A defending player committing a deliberate offence in the circle that does not prevent a probable or actual goal.

**PENALTY STROKES**

Penalty Strokes are taken on the penalty stroke spot - 5 metres from the goal-line into the pitch.

Apart from the defending goalkeeper and the penalty stroke taker, all other players must be beyond the centre-line.

The goalkeeper must remain on the goal-line until the ball is played.

The taker must be positioned behind the ball and must not touch the ball a second time.

The clock stops (time is stopped by the umpires) immediately a penalty stroke is awarded.

Note:

The umpire will ask the goalkeeper and the taker if they are ready before the whistle is blown. The whistle will then be blown. The penalty stroke must not be taken before the whistle is blown.

***A Penalty Stroke shall be awarded for any one of the following reasons:***

- An offence by a defending player inside the circle that prevents the probable scoring of a goal.
- An intentional offence in the circle by a defending player against an opponent has possession of the ball or an opportunity to play the ball.
- Repeated early breaking off the back-line by defending players while defending penalty corners (i.e. on more than 3 occasions having already been warned / penalised by the umpires).

Following a penalty stroke, play is re-started with a centre pass (if a goal has been scored or awarded). If no goal is scored or awarded, play is re-started with a hit to the defence taken at the top of the shooting circle.

Note:

A goal can be awarded if in the process of a penalty stroke, the defending goalkeeper commits an offence that prevents a definite goal from being scored.

**ACCIDENTS & INJURIES**

If the game is temporarily suspended because of an accident or injury where no offence occurred, it shall be re-started with a bully close to the spot where the incident occurred.

Note:

No bully shall ever be played within 14.4 metres of the back-lines, (inside the shooting circle).

Players who are cut or bleeding will be required to leave the pitch immediately and shall not be allowed to return until the bleeding has been suppressed or stopped.

**THE UMPIRES**

Mini Hockey shall be controlled by one or two umpires (preferably two). The umpires are responsible for all decisions and penalties.

England Hockey strongly supports the development of officiating for all young people. All Mini Hockey Organisers are encouraged to provide young players with an opportunity to experience umpiring and officiating.

It is a fun and rewarding experience for young people to blow the whistle in hockey.

**GUIDANCE FOR UMPIRES**

England Hockey is very keen to see all of our young players able to 'blow a whistle' - there are a number of young umpiring awards and projects that are linked to mini hockey. These

include the Young Umpire Award, the Foundation Umpire Award, the Young Umpire Challenge and Young Umpire Taster Days.

Two umpires are appointed to each game of mini hockey. They work together as the 3rd team on the pitch. In umpiring terms, there is very little difference between mini hockey and 11 a-side hockey.

**The pitch:**

The pitch is only half the size of an 11 a-side pitch and there are 14 players to oversee as opposed to 22. There are no 23m lines, the penalty stroke spots are closer to the goal-lines (5m instead of 7m) and the corner markers are closer to the corners (3m instead of 5m). The shooting circles, the penalty corner markers, goals and centre line are all exactly the same.

**The rules / play:**

There are 3 key differences from the 11 a-side game.

1. Any intentional offence by a player in their defending half of the pitch should be penalised by the umpire - a penalty corner should be awarded to the opposition.
2. When a penalty corner is awarded, 2 of the defending team must go to the shooting circle at the opposite end of the pitch.
3. When a penalty stroke is awarded all non-involved players must go to the other side of the centre line.

**Important message:**

If you are interested in volunteering to umpire mini hockey, the most important thing to consider, is that the players are young, they are learning and they are trying their best. Be supportive of them. Help to make their experience and your own positive, fun and rewarding.

Helping young people can be so rewarding



Volunteer now and *make a difference*