# Hockey Rules at Never Less

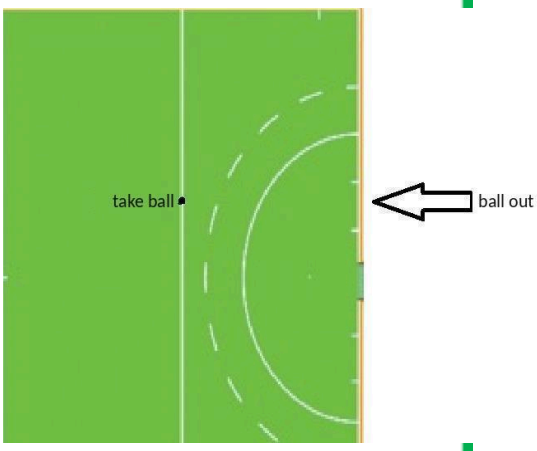
At Never Less we play 25-minute matches of 11 against 11 (with a maximum of 5 men on the pitch), without goalkeepers, so all 11 players are field players. With a few exceptions, we follow the rules of the KNHB (Royal Dutch Hockey Association). Below are some basic rules with clarifications and the restarts of play used at Never Less. Tips for umpires are on the last pages.

## Basic rules

- **Foot** - a foot occurs when the ball hits a part of the body; this is not allowed. A ball that hits the hand holding the stick does not count as a foot, but only if the hand makes no movement towards the ball.
- **Back stick** - the ball may not be played with the rounded side of the stick.
- **High ball** - at Never Less, the ball may NOT be raised if this gives you an advantage. This applies, for example, in a dangerous situation, when raising the ball inside the circle, or when playing the ball over a stick. A slightly bouncing pass or reception outside the circle that gives no advantage is tolerated.
- **Hacking** - hitting the opponent's stick without playing the ball. This is not allowed.
- **Hitting** - at Never Less, hitting is not allowed in the attacking half or in your own circle, because there is no goalkeeper.
- **Obstruction** - the attacker deliberately stands still between the ball and the defender to prevent the defender from reaching the ball. This is not allowed.
- **Pushing** - opponents may not be pushed.
- **Distance** - when the ball is put back into play, the defending team must always keep a distance of 5 metres. Inside the 23-metre area, the attacking team must also keep a distance of 5 metres.

## Dead-ball situations

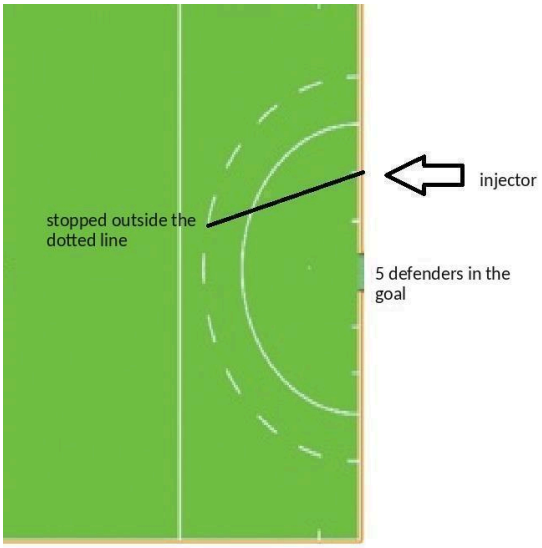
- **Over the sideline** - if the ball crosses the sideline, it is taken where it crossed the line by the team that did not touch it last.
- **Hit-out** - if the ball crosses the back line and was last touched by the attacking team, it is taken in line with where it crossed, at most level with the top of the circle.
- **Long corner** - if the ball crosses the back line and was last touched by the defending team, it is taken on the 23-metre line, in line with where it crossed.



- **Free hit** - anywhere on the pitch except inside the circle, a free hit is awarded for a foul. The ball is then taken at the spot where the foul was committed, by the team that was fouled.
- **Free hit for the defending team inside the circle** - if a foul is committed against the defending team inside the circle, the defence may take the free hit anywhere inside the circle.
- **Penalty corner** - this is awarded when the defence commits a foul inside the circle, for example a foot, a raised ball or deliberately playing the ball over the back line.

## Penalty corner at Never Less

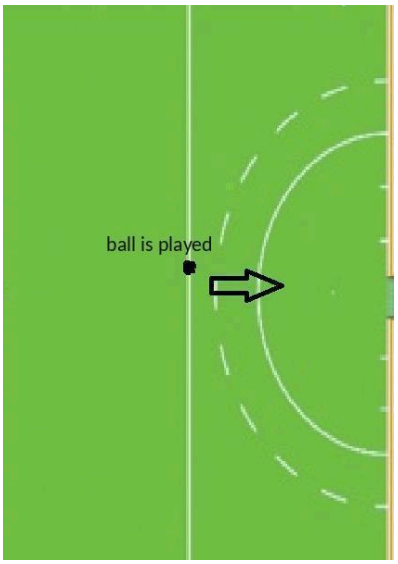
- 5 defenders in the goal and the rest of the defending team beyond the centre line.
- One injector at the penalty corner mark who passes the ball in, and all attackers outside the dotted line (they do not all have to stand around it).
- The ball is passed in and must have been outside the dotted line before the attack can continue towards the goal. **A goal can therefore only be scored once the ball has been outside the dotted line!**




 The defenders and attackers may only run in/out once the ball has been played by the injector.

## Penalty stroke

- **Penalty stroke** - a penalty stroke is awarded for a foul inside the circle that prevents a goal (for example a foot on the goal line that prevents a goal).
- The penalty stroke is taken from the 23-metre line on an open goal (with no defender in it), so the attacker can try to play the ball in with a single movement (without running up).



## Shoot-out

- If a final ends in a draw, shoot-outs are taken.
- An attacker starts on the 23-metre line and a defender on the penalty spot. After the umpire has blown the whistle, the attacker has 8 seconds to score the shoot-out.
- There are four possible outcomes
    1. The attacker scores  a goal for the attacker
    2. The attacker does not score or commits a foul  no goal for the attacker
    3. The defender commits a serious or deliberate foul on the attacker or the ball to prevent a goal  penalty stroke for the attacker
    4. The defender commits any other, unintentional foul  a new shoot-out for the attacker
- Both teams get five attempts to score from a shoot-out; the team with the most goals wins the match.

## Match fixing

- Agreeing on the result of a match in advance is not allowed. Losing on purpose is not allowed either. If the board or another team notices that this happens, strict action will be taken. This rule is brought to you in part by team Balvaria in 2022/23.

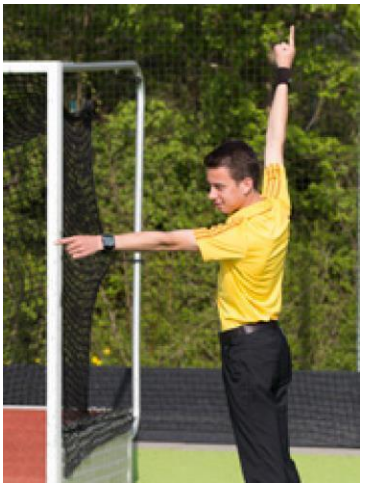
## Tips for umpires

- Blow the whistle loudly and clearly so that everyone on the pitch can hear you and stops. This also makes you come across as much more confident.
- Give clear signals with your arms and hold the signal until both teams have clearly seen it.
- Move along with the ball and the game. The better you move with the play along the sideline and back line, the better you can see what happens yourself, and the more the players will trust you.
- Let play continue if an advantage situation arises or may arise, and still blow the whistle if the advantage does not materialise.
- Do not umpire too strictly for beginners, for example when a reception or pass in midfield is not perfectly within the rules. You can clearly tell when someone has little hockey experience.
- Keep an eye on what the umpire on the other side is doing, for example in busy situations in the circle. As an umpire you cannot see everything, so support each other when needed.
- When you blow the whistle, explain your decision if a player does not understand it.

- Some important signals for an umpire:

  - For a foul or a ball out of play, clearly indicate which team gets the ball. Point towards the goal in which the team that gets the ball has to score.

  - A goal: point to the centre of the pitch.

  - The penalty corner: point towards the goal.

- The penalty stroke: point to the penalty spot with one hand.