



Guidelines for 2009 AHL Competition – New Rule Interpretations

The following information is provided for teams and officials participating in the 2009 AHL Competitions. Hockey Australia will review these interpretations following the conclusion of these competitions.

It is important to keep in mind the objectives of the new rules for 2009:
To speed up the game & reduce the possibility of danger at 'dead ball' situations in the 23m area of the field

Note: The free hit, centre pass, and putting the ball back into play, (sideline "long corner" and 15m hit). All these are now grouped together and shall be interpreted in a similar manner.

Note: the ball still has to move 1 metre if passed directly to a "team mate" from a free hit.

13.2 g The Self-play free hit

The team taking the free hit.

A player must make two clear motions.

- A small hit or push is needed then they can play on.
- A free hit is not taken if a player just dribbles off with the ball.
- The player must stop the ball before taking a free hit – this indicates that the free hit is to be taken. (some leniency in open play as per "old" rule).
- The ball does not have to move a metre before the second motion.
- It is possible for a player to "self-pass" and "throw an overhead pass" as the second motion (Be sure the ball is safe on the way up. This includes safety to players who have not had time to move 5 metres.).

Note: Players from the same team do not have to be 5m from the free hit except in the attacking 23m area.

Note: A team with the free hit does not have to wait for opposition players to move 5 metres from where the free hit is to be taken.

Penalties: If a free hit is not taken correctly a free hit the other way can be given (Be proactive – avoid replays & reversals).

Opposition Players

Opposition players must move 5 metres from where the free hit is to be taken. This must be done with out any delay.

Note: Umpires must take action for players deliberately “standing over the ball” or “hitting the ball away” to prevent a free hit from being taken – this is “gamesmanship”.

Penalties for such actions will be the same as we have enforced in the past. A warning (Verbal or green) may be appropriate unless the action is clearly intentional and affects the game the temporary suspension should be enforced (5 minute Yellow card). Please do not use the 10m penalty – gamesmanship must be penalised firmly

Umpires must be very proactive in moving players 5 metres from free hits (Verbal and whistling) - avoid replays & reversals

Opposition players cannot interfere with the play until they have retreated the 5 metres from where the free hit is to be taken.

Note: Playing the ball in any way, ”getting in the way” or “running next” to the ball carrier who has taken a self play free hit is not acceptable.

Note: Be aware or teams taking a self-play free hit manufacturing interference from opposition players.

Penalties for interfering with play or manufacturing will be the same as we will use for preventing free hits from being taken.

13.1 Location of a free hit

(Proximity to the breach of the rules and the taking of a free hit.)

1. Very open play (not in the attacking 23 area):
If there are no opposition players directly contesting the free hit - allow the free to be taken in the general proximity of the area.
2. Opposition players contesting the free hit.
The free hit must be taken within playing distance from where the breach occurred.
3. Inside the 23m area:
The free hit must be taken close to the spot where the free hit occurred.
4. Inside the dotted circle:
The ball must be taken back to the nearest point 5 metres from the circle.
5. Sideline hits and “long corners”
Players taking the free hit must attempt to put the ball on the line.
6. Defensive free-hits & 15s are as per the previously existing rules.

Penalties: This is the same as umpires have done for several years. Players who intentionally take free hits when the ball is clearly too far away from the true location can have the free hit reversed.

Free hits taken inside the Attacking 23 metre area.

Note: This is very simple and should be applied as directed:

- All players other than the player playing the ball must be 5 metres from the ball when the free hit is taken. This includes bringing the ball back into play.
- Before the ball can enter the circle, it must be touched by another player.
- At a self play free hit, the ball must travel at least 5 metres before it is played into or through the circle.

Note: Hard hits or pushes passing the ball to a team mate who deflects the ball into the circles is permitted. The second player must be outside the circle and 5 metres from the free hit when it is taken. Be aware of dangerous/ out of control high deflections

Note: Bringing the ball back into play is included in these interpretations (sideline and “long corner”)

Note: A player can “self pass” and then dribble directly into the circle, or pass the ball into the circle once the ball has moved 5 metres from where the free hit was taken.

Note: Umpires must be proactive – if the ball is in the wrong spot communicate this to the players before they have the chance to take the free hit. (avoid replays/reversals)

**Hockey Australia Officiating Commission
25th February 2009**