

## **New Rules Briefing for Clubs and Players**

### **Self pass**

You can now self-pass to start the game following the award of a free-hit, centre pass, sideline ball or long corner. (The rules for penalty corners and penalty strokes have not changed.)

You must stop the ball, or make an attempt to stop the ball. Good umpires will apply common sense in the same way that they did with old free hits so that slightly moving balls are allowed.

The self-pass must comprise two actions (one of which may be to stop the ball). Make it obvious that the free hit has been taken. It is sensible to tap the ball to make it clear to everyone that you are playing. Make it very clear to the umpire whether you are bringing the ball up to take a 16, or that you are taking the 16 to avoid confusion.

Aerials can be played immediately once the self-pass is taken.

There is no requirement for the ball to travel 1m if you self pass. It must still travel 1m before another player on your team can play the ball.

The self-pass must be taken within playing distance of the offence. Good umpires will not insist on the ball being moved back to the exact point of the offence. Good umpires may allow the self-pass to be taken further away than 'playing distance' if it does not influence the play.

All defenders must be 5m away when the self-pass is taken, and must not influence play until the ball has travelled 5m from the point where the self-pass was taken (even if this is not precisely the point where the offence occurred).

### **Influencing play**

Influencing play could include: retreating with your stick on the floor to cut off a pass, failing to retreat 5m, delaying the taking of the free hit, running through the free hit, shadowing the attacker for 5m – particularly if this reduces his options to move off in any direction, or make a particular pass.

If you commit a foul, you are effectively out of the game for 5m, expect to be dealt with harshly if you interfere with the player taking the free hit. I would expect this to be warning, green, yellow! If you break down play when the attack has a clear opportunity to go forward, it might even be straight yellow.

An attacker driving directly into a defender who is making no attempt to influence play should be penalised as a manufactured offence.

### **Attacking free hits into the circle**

At a free hit (long corner or sideline ball) within the 23m area, the ball can no longer be played directly into the circle. Before it can enter the circle the ball must either be self-passed and travel 5m (in any direction), or be touched by another player from either team.

All players must be 5m away from attacking free hits within the 23m area. In practice, good umpires should allow the pass to be taken if a player from either side is within 5m, but does not influence the play.

The free hit must be taken outside the dotted 5m line. Therefore any free hit given in the space between the dotted line and the circle line could disadvantage the attack (as they have to go backwards to take it). Umpires may choose to play on, or give more PCs in this area.

It is not an offence to play the ball towards the circle, it is only an offence when it crosses the circle line. Any free hit should be taken from where the original free hit was played.