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**To: Continental Federations
National Associations**

Rules of Hockey

Based on recommendations from the FIH Rules Committee, the FIH Executive Board has agreed changes to the Rules of Hockey and the Rules of Indoor Hockey. These changes formally take effect from 1 January 2013. However, advance notice of the main changes is provided here so that Continental Federations and National Associations may, if they wish, implement the changes sooner for matches within their jurisdiction.

Changes to the Rules of Hockey (with reference to the numbered Rules in the 2011 edition) are as follows:

Rule 8.1: method of scoring. The way a goal is scored is amended; it now includes what is sometimes referred to as an “own goal”. That is, a goal can now be scored after the ball is touched in the circle by either an attacker or a defender. It is anticipated that the detailed text will read:

- 8.1 A goal is scored when:
- a the ball is played by an attacker, or touches the stick or body of a defender, within the circle
 - b after either of these actions, the ball does not travel outside the circle before passing completely over the goal-line and under the cross-bar.

This is described as a “Mandatory Experimental Rule” so that it applies at all levels of hockey but, because it is a significant change, it will be monitored closely. After a period of review, the FIH Rules Committee will decide whether or not it becomes a permanent change to the Rules.

Rules 13.2.d and e: procedures for taking a free hit, centre pass and putting the ball back into play. The ball may now be raised intentionally and directly using a push, flick or scoop action; this action must be conducted safely. This is essentially an evolution of what is known as the “self-pass” from a free hit. By having the option to raise the ball immediately, opposing players will not have had the opportunity to get closer than five metres; a raised ball should be safer. It is anticipated that Rules 13.2 d and e will read:

- d the ball is moved using a hit, push, flick or scoop
- e the ball may be raised immediately using a push, flick or scoop but must not be raised intentionally using a hit.

--- FIH Partner ---

Rules 13.2.f and g: as a consequence of the changes above, these Rules have been deleted.

Changes to the Rules of Indoor Hockey (with reference to the numbered Rules in the 2011 edition) are as follows:

Rule 8.1: method of scoring. The change referred to above will also apply to indoor hockey.

Rule 9.12: field players hand on the pitch. This Mandatory Experimental Rule specifies that neither hand may be on the pitch when the ball is played; this includes the hand holding the stick. The Rules Committee is concerned that the stick is sometimes placed completely on the pitch which blocks play in a negative and unattractive way. This can no longer happen because the hand holding the stick must not be on the pitch.

Changes to the Rules of Hockey and the Rules of Indoor Hockey

Stick specification. Technical changes have been made to the stick specification: it has been re-written to make it clearer and the method of measuring the bow or rake has been revised. Stick manufacturers have been aware of this intended change for some time so new sticks on the market should be fully compliant. However, we are aware that some players will still be using older sticks. We therefore recommend that National Associations introduce this new specification sympathetically at lower levels.

Points of clarification

Other than as described above, changes in the 2013 editions of the Rules of Hockey and Rules of Indoor Hockey are clarifications of existing Rules. To draw attention to all changes, even to minor points of clarification, a line will appear in the margin of any text which has been changed when the full sets of Rules are published.

Playing Rules in International Matches

Variations to the playing Rules are sometimes applied in international matches. An example is a green card which indicates a temporary suspension in international matches whereas in all other matches it is a warning. These variations take account of the fact that these matches are played under the control of a technical table, with experienced players and officials. It must be understood, however, that they only apply in these matches; all other matches (ie those played at national and local level) must be played in accordance with the Rules of Hockey or the Rules of Indoor Hockey. If a National Association wishes to adopt any of the international variations for their domestic competitions, a request to do so must be submitted to the FIH Rules Committee.

Publication of Rules books

It is anticipated that Rules books incorporating the changes referred to in this notice will be printed and made available on the FIH website in September 2012.

Any questions about the information in this document should be referred to the FIH Head of Sport: roger.webb@fih.ch.

FIH Rules Committee
June 2012

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