

GHA Annual General Meeting Umpiring Secretary Report

Umpiring Courses

One Level One Umpire Course was run in the County during the season on Sunday 3rd November 2019 (hosted by Gloucestershire Hockey Association) and Mike Sheppard as tutor at Balcarras School in Cheltenham. As the course was organised by GHA, no club took ownership of it, so numbers on the course were reduced, with only 16 participants including three who were only nominated for the course less than two days before the course was due to take place. Attendance was not helped by being held on the final weekend of the half term holidays.

Club	Number on Course
East Glos HC	1
Cirencester HC	1
Lansdown HC	2
Cheltenham HC	6
Bourton & Sherborne	2
Cheltenham Junior HC	1
Winchcombe HC	1
Evesham & Badsey HC	1
Out of County	1

All umpire courses are continuously advertised on the England Hockey website. Clubs, schools and universities wishing to host either the Introduction to Umpiring course, Level One Umpire course or the Umpire Developer course can do so by completing the course request form for the relevant course below and returning it to umpiring@englandhockey.co.uk a minimum of 6 weeks prior to your preferred course date.

All umpiring courses require the successful completion of the Online Rules Test, which anyone can participate by signing up to the Hockey Hub at <https://hockeyhub.englandhockey.co.uk/officiating>, registering (or logging on if already registered), and then going through the test.

Assessments

There have been a number of successful assessments this season. I am aware of six successful assessments since the start of the 2019-2020 season. I am also aware that some local umpires have been assessed but the assessor or individual umpire has not sent me details. It is noticeable that those umpires who present themselves for assessment without officiating at least three full length matches in quite a short time frame are struggling to meet the requirements for a successful assessment. Unfortunately there were no assessments during the 2019 summer leagues and the opportunity for assessment during the 2020 summer leagues will be severely restricted due to the current Covid-19 pandemic.

Level One (unassessed) Umpires

According to the League regulations, Level One (unassessed) Umpires can officiate in the lowest divisions in the Men's (Tier 6 and below; The Marches 1 & 2; West Central 1, 2 & 3, East Central 1 & 2. Rule 8 states that *Umpires must be qualified to at least Level 1 assessed except at Tier 5 where one umpire can be Level 1 (unassessed) if the match is being used for their assessment game and at Tier 6 and below one umpire can be Level 1 (unassessed)*. In

the West Club's Women's Hockey League, Level One (unassessed) umpire can officiate at Regional Divisions 2 & 3, such as Severn 2 and Severn 3, as long as due notice is given and the other umpire is a qualified Level One umpire or above.

Meetings

I have attended the WHA Umpiring Committee meetings held in Taunton in June, October and December 2019 and one in March 2019 as the County Umpiring Representative. The minutes for these meetings are published on the West Hockey Umpiring website which can be found at <http://www.westumpires.co.uk/index.php>

There have been no Regional Young Umpire Action Group meetings this season. Caz Standfield is the RYUAG Coordinator and any young umpires wishing to develop their umpiring should contact her. I can forward details as required for any young umpires interested in developing their umpiring careers to Regional and National level.

I have attended four West Clubs' Women's Hockey League Committee Meetings held at Taunton School in June & October 2019 but missed the meeting in January 2020. The meeting held in April 2020 was held as an online meeting. I attended in the capacity of the WHA Umpiring Committee representative and also as the Gloucestershire County Representative. These are mainly involved with the routine running of the League, however the meeting in April was held mainly to discuss and decide on how to resolve the League at the end of an uncompleted season. I have also attended HGWHUA Committee meetings as the County representative.

I attended the EH Hockey Umpiring Association conference at Old Silhillians, Solihull, in June 2019. The main agenda item was the introduction of the England Hockey Officiating Management System (OMS) provided by WhostheUmpire.com who provide several official appointing systems around the world. I have used the OMS as Webmaster for the WHAUC part of the system and I am exploring the opportunities the system may offer for umpires in the GHA area.

HGWHUA

HGWHUA has continued to manage, coach, assess and progress neutral umpires who take appointments within the three counties. The chair is Terry Cook, unfortunately a new appointments secretary has yet to be identified at the time of this report. Please see the HGWHUA website for further details and also guidance how Club and County umpires can progress their umpiring careers onward.

Umpire Shortages

There is a shortage of umpires at all levels of the game. Of immediate concern is the lack of umpires prepared to take neutral appointments at County and Regional level, particularly in the women's game. This will affect Gloucester and Lydney teams, the shortage in the men's game will affect all those teams playing the Men's Divisions who have umpires appointed to their matches. The response to requests for competent umpires at the Academy Centre and Performance Centre competitions is beginning to tail off. These competitions are the start of the pathway to higher levels for both players and umpires, in particular, young umpires.

Thanks to all people who have given me assistance this season either directly or by helping out after the various requests for umpires that I have passed on from clubs and schools.

Mike Sheppard
Umpiring Secretary
2nd June 2020