**PRIMARY SCHOOLS HOCKEY LEAGUE RULES 2023/24 (reviewed 160923)**

**Starts and Re-starts:**

* Any starts and re-starts after a goal will occur from the centre circle.
* If the ball goes off the back line from a defender, play will be re-started with a corner to the attacking team
* If the ball goes off the back line from an attacker, play will be re-started with a free hit to the defending team from the edge of the penalty area.
* If the ball goes off the side-line, play will be re-started with a free hit from where the ball crossed the line and awarded to the opposite team the ball last touched.
* Players should be at least 3 metres away at a free-hit, centre-spot starts and re-starts.

**Scoring:**

* Attackers can only score if one of their team shoots or touches the ball inside the penalty area before the ball goes into the net.
* A shot from outside the penalty area that comes off a defender’s stick and goes into the goal will not be counted.

**Tackling and Fouls:**

* Players should only tackle on the open side.
* If a foul is committed inside the penalty area by the attacking team, play will be re- started with a free hit to the defending team from the edge of the penalty area.
* If a foul is committed inside the penalty area by the defending team, play will be re- started with a free hit to the attacking team 3 metres outside the penalty area. The ball cannot be played straight into the penalty area in this case.
* A free hit will be awarded for excessive use of feet to the opposition.
* Dangerous stick play will be penalised.

**General play:**

* No offsides.
* Self-pass rule allowed when a free hit awarded.
* Players can only use the flat side of the stick. Deliberate use of the back of the stick will result in a free hit being awarded to the other side
* Goalkeepers cannot come out of their penalty areas. If they do a free hit will be awarded from where they stepped out.
* Defenders and attackers can go inside the penalty areas.
* Any lifting of the ball above knee height will be penalised with a free hit from where the infringement occurred, including shots at goal.
* Raising sticks above shoulder height in close proximity to an opposing player will be deemed dangerous play and a free hit awarded to the opposing team.
* Roll on roll off subs will be allowed whenever the ball is out of play. Please make the umpires aware when preparing to make substitutions.

**PENALTY SHOOT-OUTS**

* In the event of the need for a penalty shoot-out the process will be manage by the referee on that pitch at the point the game finishes. The goalkeepers will be players in that position at the end of the game.
* There will be three penalties per team with the team scoring the most goals out of that number winning. If the teams finish on a similar number of penalty goals the process will go to a sudden-death eliminator (ie each team takes one penalty until one scores and one misses).
* The referee will toss a coin between team captains to decide which team goes first on the choice of the winner of it
* The only players allowed to take penalties are the 7 players (including goalkeeper) from each team on the pitch at the final whistle. If sudden-death stalemates require more than 7 penalties per team then players will be required to take a second penalty in the same order as they took their first ones.
* All players except the two goalkeepers and each taker in turn should wait behind the half-way line of the pitch whilst the process is underway. Spectators behind the goal will be requested to stand well back from the goal and backline.

Please direct any queries/suggestions about these rules to

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