



Year 7 & 8 Kwik Sticks

Umpire Briefing Document

When umpiring the Year 7 & 8 Kwik Sticks 7 a side format we are encouraging a focus on allowing the players to play. As a volunteer you play a massive role in facilitating and allowing games to be played. No one expects perfection from you but a consistent and fair approach is all that is asked. When surveying youth participants about negative impacts on their experiences of playing – umpiring (good or bad) is one of the lowest mentioned impacts on a youth participants experience. Coaches, parents and opposition sportsmanship rate near the top of external drivers to the overall experience, so don't feel the pressure as the kids just want to play!

The desire in the 7 a side format is more involvement, more touches and a faster game than 11 a side. The game being played on a smaller length pitch will help lead to this. We are encouraging that minor infringements are left to play on if a team does not get an unfair advantage from the situation. A couple of examples being if a ball hits a players foot while trying to stop the ball and there is no defender around allow the game to play on. Similarly if a player accidentally uses the back of their stick to stop the ball and again no one around allow the game to play. This is where the coach will identify these moments and provide some individual feedback to that player on what they need to work on.

Key focus areas for umpiring;

Safety – Our first priority is to keep all players safe. Anything you deem to be unsafe must be blown to protect the players.

Game length – Games must start on their scheduled start time. Important that the first game of the day starts on time so others throughout the morning can. Each quarter is 12 minutes long. There are no stoppages of time. There are 3 x 2 minute intervals between quarters to allow coaches to interact quickly with their teams. It is important we stick to these times.

Playing Numbers – Each team is allowed a maximum of 6 field players on the pitch at any time. If they have a fully padded goal keeper that can be their 7th player. If a team does not have a goal keeper, they can't have a 7th field player.

Penalty Corners – The attacking team can have as many people around the top of the circle as they wish. The defending team can have 4 field players (plus the goal keeper) starting in the goal to defend the penalty corner with the remaining two players starting in the opposite circle. No drag flicking or lifting the ball from the top of the circle. Deflections and a flicked shot at goal are allowed provided no danger is presented to a defending player.

Penalty Strokes – Are not to be awarded but a penalty corner in its place.

There are to be no overheads or deliberately raised balls (above knee height). There is scope to allow play on if a raised ball is not intended and presents no danger

Long corners – are to be taken from around half way in line with where the ball went over the baseline. This is a case of 'close enough is good enough' to encourage fast play.

All free hits must travel 5m before being played into the circle inside the attacking half of the field.

If you focus on these key areas and the element of allowing the game to flow and let the players play they will have a positive experience as will you. Keep it simple and consistent. Blow your whistle with confidence and signal clearly. Don't be afraid to communicate and talk to the players ie 'Foot there, blue ball' or 'long corner for red' – the players will respond positively and set up quickly for their next job.

Last but not least – thank you for helping facilitate the game and make sure you enjoy the experience of allowing the players to play!