



Community Communique – March 31, 2023

FHBC Support for Officials – FHBC RESPECT PROGRAM – Call to all Members to reflect on the Importance of Respect and Courtesy towards Officials

Dear Field Hockey BC Members

As the 2022-23 Senior Season closes and the 2023 Junior Season opens this coming weekend, I write on behalf of the FHBC Board of Directors to highlight and remind all members about the importance of respect and courtesy towards our valued Officials and Umpires at all levels of field hockey across BC.

Our great game cannot function or offer a compelling value proposition without Officials and Umpires driving the sport forward in partnership with Coaches, Players, Volunteers, and Fans. Without them we do not have a game or a sport. Like Players and Coaches, Umpires and Officials devote time, energy and expertise into performing their duties on a weekly basis and we should appreciate all the time and effort they put in.

If Field Hockey across BC is going to continue to thrive and maintain the amazing sense of community and inclusiveness it has, there needs to be respect for everyone in the game. This respect must come from those both on and off the field of play. I would encourage everyone to refamiliarize themselves with the FHBC RESPECT PROGRAM and the associated Codes of Conduct that are available to read and download from the Documents section of the FHBC Website at <https://fieldhockeybc.com/documents/>.

It remains a given that Officials and Umpires make mistakes...as do Players and Coaches. Being an Umpire or Official is a tough and often thankless job. They give up their time to ensure Players, Coaches, Parents, Fans, and Spectators enjoy everything that is great about field hockey.

Regardless of decisions made, whether right or wrong, there is no excuse or justification for verbally abusing or threatening Officials and Umpires. **Next time you think about criticizing an umpiring decision or witness someone hurling verbal abuse from beyond the field of play, choose RESPECT instead of criticism and ridicule.**

We all have a responsibility to set an example through how we act and what we say. Just like acknowledging the opposition after a hard-fought game, Officials and Umpires deserve a 'thank you' for their participation regardless of the result.

Everyone has a responsibility to make field hockey the best game it can be. We are blessed to have so many fantastic people involved in our sport and by retaining Officials and Umpires and attracting others to take up these important roles, field hockey across BC will continue to go from strength to strength. Here's to a memorable, for all the right reasons, Spring and Summer season. Enjoy!

Yours in sport,

Mark Saunders
*Executive Director
Field Hockey BC
March 31, 2023*