

MIDLAND REGION HOCKEY UMPIRING ASSOCIATION

MRHUA RADIO SETS

MRHUA is pleased to announce that many of our active outdoor umpire members will be receiving a radio for the 2014/15 season. This is a huge investment in technology made jointly with MRHA which we hope will significantly improve the quality of umpiring for all clubs.

We have had great feedback from the clubs where radios are used, but also a number of complaints where they haven't been. We hope that all members embrace this opportunity to advance the quality of umpiring that we provide to the clubs.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS & ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE NOTES

This document is issued by the MRHUA Executive Committee to answer some of the common questions we have received from members regarding the provision of new radio sets.

Allocation

At this time, it is not possible to issue units to every member. Allocation of units will be decided by the relevant Selection Committee. It is hoped that in a year's time, we should be in a position to supply radios to all of our outdoor members

Do I have to use the radios?

Yes. Introduction of radios is very important for the clubs and we know that when used properly it improves the standard of umpiring. As such, the use of radios will be mandatory for all members who have been issued with a unit at all outdoor MRHUA appointed games, and we expect all members to make use of this technology.

Who owns the radios?

The radios have been purchased by MRHUA, so the units will remain the property of MRHUA. Members will be responsible for looking after radios properly, in line with the guidance that will be provided. All radios will have a serial number and MRHUA will keep track of who has each radio; if you leave MRHUA or stop umpiring, you will have to return your radio.

How will they work?

Umpiring members will receive one radio unit that can be paired with your colleague before each game. This is simple to do, and a comprehensive training guide will be supplied for all umpires. These radio units are also identical to those supplied to NPUA umpires.

What headsets will be available?

Standard headsets will be provided with each radio. If members wish to purchase alternate or bespoke moulded headsets they can do so from the suppliers at their own cost. Also the headsets are not covered by any warranty, if they are broken, then members will be responsible for any replacement, at their own cost.

The headsets supplied by the Association must be treated with respect and handled properly, as with all items of this nature they are fairly delicate. The wires should not be tightly wrapped around the earpiece or in a tight loop or around the radio unit itself. It should be loosely packed away.

What if my radio breaks?

We have agreed a maintenance process with a supplier for common repairs. We expect all members to take care of the radios in line with the guidance that will be issued.

If your radio unit does malfunction then you should contact the Kit Manager (Jerry Yates – 07971 173423) and arrange for the return of the unit to him. Upon receipt by him a spare, if available, will be issued and the faulty unit returned to the supplier.

If radios are not looked after in line with the guidance, or are lost, members may be liable for the cost of repair or replacement.

Will indoor only members get radios?

No. We encourage the use of radios supplied to outdoor members during the indoor season.

Will candidates get radios?

No, unfortunately only full outdoor members will currently be considered for receiving radios. Candidates will receive a radio once they have passed their assessment, depending upon availability of spare units.

General

The Executive Committee is delighted that many umpires will now have their own radios, and is confident that this will have a positive effect on performance. If you have any queries that are not answered in this document, please contact your Chair of Selectors.

Your Radio Unit & Equipment

Whenever you will be using a Radio, always ensure you have with you:

- Tape to secure the mic to your skin, such as surgical tape
- Scissors to go with the tape

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Getting Started

Wearing the radio and equipment and ensuring you are comfortable can take some time. Therefore, ensure you allow an additional 20 minutes in your match preparation – you will need it!

The mics need to be charged after every game (they should last 120 minutes). As the power reduces signal issues might occur.

Looking After the Microphone

The microphone earpiece and mouth boom need to be dried after use, due to sweat and spit from prior use.

Therefore:

- Alcohol wipe the earpiece, mouth boom and mic pack before and after you have used it.
- Leave the entire pack to dry after use, at room temperature.

During the Game

Once you are set up, you are good to go – now comes the hard part – learning how to use the mic effectively as part of your existing tools.

MOST IMPORTANT THING TO REMEMBER

The radio is an addition to your game not a replacement for your existing communication skills – ARENA umpiring is still very much necessary and needed!!

What to expect?

- During your first game you may find the addition of the radio takes you out of your comfort zone, therefore you may not speak into it often. However, you will:
 - Hear your colleague's whistle.
 - Hear all conversations your colleague, or players near to them might have.
 - Find it difficult to hear from the side your earpiece is in – so turn your head with the 'good ear' towards a player when listening to them.
 - Find it difficult to concentrate initially – focus on the hockey and not the radio or what you can hear.
- On the next occasion you will be used to wearing the pack and may begin to use the mic pack too much, talking about every change in tempo or decision during the game – be mindful of what your colleague needs from you, as well as what you need.
- Eventually you will find a balance. Probably more quickly than you may initially believe.

An additional tool:

- Remember to use your other skills in addition to the radio – ensure signalling is big and well presented, make eye contact with your colleague and sell decisions with your body language to colleagues, players, the crowd and UM.
- The radio should not replace any of these skills you have developed; it simply helps clarify issues you would not usually be able to discuss during a game.
- Still take time to come together to discuss major game changing decisions.
- Still signal a decision even if you speak it into the mic – everyone else still needs to see the decision.
- Still nod your head, smile and give a thumbs up to your colleague so everyone can see your support and good communication, even if you have just told them verbally what a great advantage they just gave.

Generally

- The radios help ensure you are both on the same page with regards to the change in tempo, levels of the game or use of cards.
- They enable you to clarify what you gave a card for in addition to the signal you showed.
- They enable you to confirm a player's number with your colleague more quickly.
- To support/consult/clarify decisions *if required*
- To discuss things like tightening up the whistle in response to a rise in tempo, use of cards
- To be aware of low level control comments between your colleague and the players;
- To give praise for a good call maybe.
- And so much more

Enjoy the learning experience, help us look after the limited supply of radio packs that we have and please be responsible with this expensive equipment.

Enjoy and good luck!