WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A GREAT UMPIRE?

1. PRACTICE
   a. On-Field
      i. Volunteer
      ii. Attend an event or tournament
      iii. Work on your mobility for specific game situations
      iv. Apply feedback to fellow umpires
      v. Perfecting rule application
      vi. Use of tools
      vii. How to communicate
   b. Off-Field
      i. Have video taken of yourself for your review
      ii. Attend clinics and seminars
      iii. Self-analyze your game
      iv. Invest your time and resources to go to other matches

2. STUDY THE GAME
   a. Watch game film (even if it is not a game you officiated)
   b. Read the rules FREQUENTLY
   c. Attend clinics
   d. Secure yourself a mentor
   e. Volunteer to mentor others when appropriate
   f. Read books and magazines about umpiring and coaching
      i. National Association of Sports Officials Magazine, FHLife Magazine
   g. Be open to discussions with coaches
   h. Invest in yourself by going to clinics or courses to learn

3. FITNESS
   a. Make it an all-year process, not just as field hockey approaches
   b. Set standards and goals for yourself
   c. Test your fitness
   d. Make it a lifestyle
      i. Cardio
      ii. Nutrition
      iii. Sleep patterns
      iv. Yoga
   e. Simulate game situations in training
   f. Work around environmental factors (i.e. weather)
   g. Find mental exercise (i.e. reaction, memory, lumosity.com)
4. PROFESSIONALISM

a. Teamwork
   i. Communication with your partner prior to game day
   ii. Know where to meet
   iii. Travel time
   iv. Compensate for the unknown that may not be good (i.e. late arrival/traffic)
   v. Relieve/reduce your level of stress before arriving
   vi. Uniforms
   vii. Double check you have your coin, cards and cap
   viii. Prepared for weather
   ix. Have your bag packed as necessary before arrival

b. Pre-Game
   i. Arrive early to prepare
   ii. Conduct a radio check
   iii. Be consistent in application and answer questions properly
   iv. Allow yourself time to warm up. Keep your routine consistent.
   v. Know the game you may be dealing with.

c. Know your Surroundings
   i. Do not criticize others when in the stands or benches
   ii. Keep comments to yourself

5. KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULES

a. Resources
   i. Rule Books
   ii. FIH Rules of Hockey App
   iii. Read briefings and documents
   iv. Review comparison chart
   v. Watch video to study the application of the rules
   vi. Ask questions
   vii. Study applications and concepts of rules
       1. Done to make game simple and understandable
       2. Don’t over analyze
       3. Know the basics

6. FOCUS AND CONCENTRATION

a. Increasing Focus
   i. Watch games in real time
   ii. Ask yourself how would you have called it?
   iii. Mindful internet activities (i.e. reaction, memory, focus)
   iv. Yoga
   v. Ask for help when focus is waning
   vi. There is always something to watch
WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A GREAT UMPIRE?

b. Maintaining Focus
   i. Move more to keep blood flowing
   ii. Notice if your head drops
   iii. Find a way to refocus
   iv. Recognize tunnel vision
      1. Look around, off ball as appropriate
      2. Stay active, mentally and physically
   v. Ignore what you might hear that takes focus away:
      1. Before the match
      2. During the match
   vi. Don’t dwell on past decisions, such as:
      1. Signaling too long
      2. Processing if decisions was right or wrong

7. MANAGEMENT/CONFIDENCE

a. Umpire matches year-round to work on
   i. Communication
   ii. Whistle sound and timing
   iii. Body language
   iv. Use of cards
b. Expose yourself to as much as possible
   i. You don’t know what you don’t know
   ii. Create or obtain opportunities
c. Learn to manage
   i. Not everyone is the same
      1. Use different tools
   ii. Know your audience
   iii. Teams directly
   iv. This is the hardest part of umpiring
   v. Learn from non-successful moments
d. Observe
   i. Warm-ups and possible tactics
   ii. Don’t just walk around the field pre-game
   iii. Penalty corners/overheads/movements
   iv. Look around when able during matches
e. In sync for progression of penalties
   i. Set standards and hold to them
   ii. Players need to know what will happen next
   iii. Use radios as necessary
8. COMMUNICATION

a. Assigners
   i. Contact as necessary
      1. If problems arise
      2. Changes occur
      3. There are game issues

b. Players
   i. When players look for advice
   ii. Work with them as necessary
   iii. Use:
      1. Whistle
      2. Cards
      3. Voice as appropriate
         a. Do not over talk
   iv. Do not coach players
   v. Manage consistently
   vi. Whistle tone communication and severity
      1. All 22 players on the field can hear the whistle
      2. No excuse for not hearing

c. Coaches
   i. Setting the tone and atmosphere
      1. Do not over talk and keep it simple
      2. Play to the whistle
   ii. Body language and reaction
   iii. Umpires held to higher standard of communication
      1. Keep calm
      2. No emotions
      3. Nothing negative

d. Partners
   i. Radios Usage
      1. Expectations
      2. Timing of radio talk
      3. As necessary
         a. Do not make calls for partner
         b. Do not over chat
         c. Keep it relevant

9. EMPATHY

a. For all stakeholders:
   i. Players
   ii. Coaches
      1. Understanding vs. interruptions
   iii. Spectators
   iv. Ball chasers
   v. Sponsors
WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A GREAT UMPIRE?

vi. Grounds crew
vii. Administrators
b. Will vary based on levels
   i. Safety concerns first
   ii. Understanding of the game
   iii. Skill levels
   iv. Scrimmage vs. real game
c. Understand surroundings
   i. Travel distances
   ii. Weather
   iii. Pitch layout

10. CONSISTENCY

a. Know the applications of the rules
   i. One voice, one message concept
   ii. Discard personal opinions
b. Accuracy
c. Fairness
d. Review past performances
e. Know that some things will not be seen as consistent
   i. “the criteria used to decide must be consistent to be consistent”
   ii. Understand conditions may change
   iii. Perspective is a factor

11. WILLINGNESS TO LEARN

a. There are always things to learn and learn from
b. Year-round learning
c. Don’t let finances/dollars affect your learning
   i. Volunteer
   ii. Decide the what, the how and time are you willing to learn
   iii. Learn more by doing
   iv. Willing to be on your own to learn
   v. Critique yourself
d. Get out of your comfort zone to learn
   i. Challenge yourself
   ii. Embrace learning
e. Secure a Mentor
   i. With a group
   ii. With a trusted colleague
   iii. With a hockey friend
WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A GREAT UMPIRE?

12. OPEN MINDEDNESS

a. Willing to listen
b. Listen to everyone
   i. Players
   ii. Coaches
   iii. Peers
   iv. Spectators
   v. National Governing Body
c. Take what you can
   i. Sometimes you’re ready for the information, sometimes you’re not
d. Digest what you can
e. Discard what is not needed
f. File for future reference
g. Self-analyzation
   i. Why did I not see that?
   ii. Was I concentrated for the whole match?
   iii. What can I improve on next time?
   iv. What went right?
   v. What went wrong?
   vi. What do I need to work on?
h. Be open to reviewing decisions
   i. After reaction from players
   ii. A proper question being asked
   iii. Information from partner as requested/necessary

14. UNDERSTANDING OF THE GAME

a. Know Level of experience and skill
b. Know your partner
c. What might you deal with?
d. Know the applications of the rules
e. Decision making without blowing the whistle

Other than USA Field Hockey providing umpires with events and training opportunities, it is up to you to decide what you are willing to put into your learning to become the best umpire you possibly can.

Thanks to everyone in this session for their input, honesty and experience to help umpiring in the United States.