

Canterbury Premier League (CPL)

Timed Match Pilot – 2026 Season Proposal to Affiliated Clubs

Purpose of the Pilot

Canterbury Hockey is proposing to **trial (pilot) a revised match timing format** within the **Canterbury Premier League (CPL) only** for the upcoming season.

The intent of this pilot is to:

- Improve game flow and fairness around key stoppages
- Align more closely with national and international trends in timed hockey
- Reduce the impact of time-wasting during critical moments
- Gather evidence and feedback to inform future competition decisions

This pilot will **not** apply to any other Canterbury Hockey competitions.

Current Match Format (for Reference)

Under the existing CPL format:

- 4 × 17-minute quarters
- Continuous time (clock does not stop unless there is a serious injury)

Proposed Pilot Match Format (CPL Only)

For the duration of the pilot, CPL matches will be played under the following timing structure:

Quarter Length

- **4 × 15-minute quarters**

Timekeeping

- The match clock will **stop** for the following events:
 - Goals
 - Penalty corners
 - Player cards (all colours)
 - Umpire-requested stoppages (e.g. injury, safety, equipment issues)
- The clock will **restart** on the umpire's signal once play is ready to resume

Key Differences at a Glance

Element	Current Format	Pilot Format (CPL)
Quarter length	17 minutes	15 minutes
Clock	Continuous	Stops for key stoppages
Time management	Informal	Official-controlled

Rationale for the Change

The proposed pilot aims to address several observed challenges in high-performance domestic hockey:

- **Fairness:** Ensures full playing time is delivered in each quarter
- **Game integrity:** Reduces incentive for deliberate delays at goals, cards, and penalty corners
- **Consistency:** Provides clearer and more consistent time management across matches
- **Player development:** Mirrors environments players are likely to experience at national and international levels
- **Game management tool:** Used by officials to effectively manage the game and support accurate and well considered decision making without time pressure.

Implementation Details

- The pilot will apply to **all CPL matches only**
- Officials will receive specific training that will follow FIH procedures for time stoppage.
- Official timekeeping responsibilities will be clearly defined prior to the season
- Clubs will be provided with pre-season briefings and FAQs

Match Scheduling and Warm-Up Considerations

- Due to the introduction of stopped time, **overall match durations may increase** compared with the current continuous-time format

- As a result, **match start times across CPL and Division 1 may be adjusted** on shared turfs
- Any scheduling adjustments will be made to ensure that **all CPL and Division 1 teams receive a minimum of a 10-minute on-turf warm-up** prior to their match
- Match officials will confirm start times of matches with team management prior to their on turf warm up commencing.

Monitoring and Review

Canterbury Hockey will actively monitor the pilot throughout the season, including:

- Feedback from players, coaches and officials
- Match duration and scheduling impacts
- Consistency of application across fixtures
- Any unintended consequences or operational challenges

At the conclusion of the season, Canterbury Hockey will:

- Review findings
- Consult with CPL clubs
- Decide whether to retain, modify, expand, or discontinue the format

Feedback and Engagement

Club feedback is a critical part of this process. Canterbury Hockey welcomes:

- Questions prior to implementation
- Ongoing feedback during the season
- Formal input during the end-of-season review

Further information and operational guidelines will be shared ahead of the CPL season commencement.