

England Ice Hockey NIHL Regulations 2023-2024

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6. National Ice Hockey League (NIHL) regulations

The following rules apply to all NIHL competitions. Failure to comply will be assessed as an off-ice offence as denoted in *the Supporting Information*.

6.1 Team eligibility

To be eligible for any EIH competition, each team must:

- Complete EIH affiliation prior to entering EIH competition in the following season.
- Provide email and telephone details of a lead contact and fixtures secretary who will be the primary liaison for EIH.
- Submit an expression of interest to enter a competition by 15 May prior to the start of the following season.
- Make available sufficient home ice dates to fulfil their home league fixtures and must provide home ice dates to EIH within five working days of being so asked. This number is defined annually and detailed in appendix for each league.
- Settle any outstanding club or team fines owed to EIH or EIH affiliated clubs.
- Meet the minimum squad requirements outlined below.

6.2 Minimum squads

The minimum number of players, coaches and managers to enter a team in a league must be registered by 31 August of the playing season. Failure to have the required numbers by this deadline may result in the team being removed from EIH competitions for that season.

NIHL teams must have a minimum of 12 registered players within the section membership category, including a netminder (11 + 1). To enter two teams in the league, teams must have a minimum 24 registered players including 2 netminders (22 + 2).

The maximum number of registered players for one team is 23 players plus a minimum of 2 netminders for NIHL National and NIHL1, and 28 players and a minimum of 2 netminders for NIHL2. The maximum number of registered players for one team is 46 players plus netminders for NIHL National and NIHL1, and 56 players plus netminders for NIHL2. Maximum numbers do not include players aged U18.

Clubs must have an EIH registered and qualified L2 Team Coach and L1 Assistant Coach available for teams on match days. All clubs are strongly recommended to have a registered and qualified medical practitioner. Coaches can be registered elsewhere or shared with another team within the same club.

6.3 Player eligibility

To be eligible to for any NIHL competition, the following applies:

- All players must be registered only with EIH, with the exception of U18s who may be registered with SIH.
- Any outstanding player fines must be settled.
- A player who initially registers for a senior membership forfeits the right to play down to junior team or take part in any junior league, competition or tournament.

In addition, all players must be able to present one of the following:

- A British passport

- A valid work permit at Tier 2 or Tier 5 including endorsement (as defined by IHUK) and hold a valid IIHF International Transfer Card.

The eligibility for players competing within the NIHL are categorised as either British or non-British. The rule facilitates a legitimate sporting objective that promotes competitive balance and encourages the training and development of young players. The on-ice rules outlined within our amateur leagues support:

- Increasing the quality of training and development of young players
- The protection of competitive balance, and
- The protection of international competition.

The definitions below have been outlined to clearly show eligibility within senior leagues in ice hockey in addition to the on-ice rules therein.

6.3.1 British and non-British trained players

A British trained player is a player who operated under the jurisdiction of the UK national association for a period of 16 consecutive months (480 days) before their 18th birthday or who is currently registered as an Under 18.

A non-British trained player is any other player who does not meet the requirements in rule number 1.

1. The defining factor on whether a player fulfils requirements in rule 1 will be transfers to / from the UK national association before their 18th birthday.
2. Where a player has never been registered, a player may be authorised as British trained under IIHF transfer regulations following the appropriate international requirements therein.

A team may register an unlimited number of British and non-British trained players under the above definitions.

6.3.2 Applications for reclassification of players

All applications for being classified as British-trained should be made on the appropriate form. All players whose applications are incomplete will be rejected and any players whose information does not match the above rules will also be rejected. Where insufficient evidence has been presented, an application will also be rejected.

<https://www.cognitofrms.com/EnglishIceHockeyAssociation/NIHLBritishTrainedApplication>

6.4 Movement of players

Player movement between clubs and teams during the season can occur in the form of:

- Registering for more than one club (“dual registration” in Gameday)
- Transfer between clubs or teams (“permanent transfer” in Gameday)
- Emergency transfers (“emergency transfer” in Gameday)
- Dispensation to play-up an age group or division (“temporary transfer” of no more than 28 days in Gameday)

The following regulations apply:

- Any transfer request is valid for 28 days, except for emergency transfers and dispensation. No further transfer request can be made by the player until this period has expired.
- All parties involved (“primary club”, “secondary club”, player and parent/guardian of the player where the player is U18 must agree to the terms of any agreement or transfer.
- Applications must have been agreed in writing; e-mails between designated club officials are accepted and between all parties including parents where applicable.
- Clubs must submit an official transfer request to EIH on the Gameday platform and complete all stages of the approval process.
- A minimum five days prior to the fixture being played must be given for the application to be considered for non-ITC card holders.
- EIH eligibility rules still apply.
- EIH must approve any movement of players between teams. EIH reserves the right to refuse any movement between teams at their sole discretion.

A player given special dispensation will not count towards required minimum squad strength as of 31 August of the playing season as they are not solely registered to one team and, as such, may not be available. Players who have been granted permission to move between teams will be included in gameday minimum bench numbers.

Failure to comply with the above will mean the player is ineligible to play in EIH competitions. Should they do so, the team will be deemed as icing an ineligible player and the appropriate off-ice sanction applied.

6.4.1 ITC restrictions

A limited ITC card holder may only register with one club. An unlimited ITC holder may be entitled to some of the movement opportunities in *6.4 Movement of Players*, however this is assessed by EIH in accordance with IHUK rules.

6.4.2 Registering for more than one club

A player may register with multiple clubs in the following circumstances:

- A junior player playing up to a senior league whereby their primary club does not have a team in the senior division, or an available opportunity for them to play. This applies for NIHL and WNIHL divisions. The primary club retains priority over the player in the event of a fixture clash where the minimum bench-strength would not be met and the fixture would be forfeited as a result.
- A senior player playing in both WNIHL and NIHL may register for different clubs; they are not required to play out of the same rink. This rule must be applied in accordance with *section 7.4.5.1 ‘Playing up’ a division*.
- A senior player playing in the NIHL who is aged U23 on the 31 December of the playing season, playing up a division in the NIHL whereby their primary club does not have a team in a higher division or an opportunity to develop within the same club.
- Any registration granted with multiple clubs will last until the end of the season in which it was issued.

In all instances, the player eligibility rules apply as outlined in *section 6.3 Player eligibility*, including adhering to the minimum age restrictions. Please see *section 6.4.5 Dispensation: ‘Playing up’* for additional stipulations.

Example:

Club A have an U18 team and no agreement or opportunity to play-up with an affiliated NIHL team. In this circumstance, a 17-year-old player registered with the U18 teams at Club A may also request to register with another NIHL club.

Club A have an NIHL team playing out of Rink 1. WNIHL Club B also play out of Rink 1. In this instance, a player does not have to play for WNIHL Club B, but can instead choose to play for WNIHL Club C who play out of Rink 2.

6.4.3 Transfers

During the season, a player may transfer between clubs (or teams) with permission from both the releasing club (team) and the club (team) to which they are transferring, along with the parent / guardian. The transfer will be valid until the end of the season unless otherwise stipulated.

The deadline for players to transfer between clubs or teams within a club is 31 January of the playing season. Players transferring after this date will not be eligible for league competition but may take part in challenge games and tournaments.

Once a transfer has been approved, it is locked for 28 days. No new dispensation or transfer request can be made by the player until this period has expired.

For international transfers, IIHF deadlines must be followed.

6.4.4 Emergency transfers

Emergency transfer requests allow dispensation for players to play for another club or team on a temporary basis (one game) due to unforeseen circumstances. Such dispensations cannot be utilised where EIHL deems an unfair advantage will be gained.

Emergency transfers are normally granted for standalone matches and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and are not confirmed until approved by EIHL.

The following applies:

- In senior hockey, emergency transfer requests are only permitted for netminders whereby a game could not be completed without the request. Such dispensations cannot be utilised where EIHL deems an unfair advantage will be gained.
- When a player is placed on the NIHL injury list, the team may request a replacement transfer. The minimum period for the transfer is 28 days. A player must remain on the injury reserve list for a period of no fewer than 28 days. Once a player returns from the injury reserve list, a player must be released if the return causes a team to go above its roster squad size. A player who is removed from a roster following a player returning from injury may not re-sign for the same team for a period of 28 days.
- Emergency transfers can be obtained from U18 teams in any division, WNIHL teams in any division, and Recreational teams.
- All emergency transfer requests are assessed and approved on an individual basis. EIHL reserve the right to refuse any emergency dispensation request at their discretion.

6.4.5 Dispensation: 'Playing up'

Playing up is used to aid development of players. There is free movement of players to 'play up' within their primary club. Playing up is defined as playing for a team in a higher division or playing up one age group, including playing up from junior to senior hockey.

Clubs must demonstrate that due diligence has been done to ensure their responsibility to duty of care is fulfilled.

6.4.5.1 'Playing up' a division

Where a club has a team in two or more divisions, a player may play up from the lower division's team. The following restrictions must be observed:

- Any player who is aged 16 on the date of the fixture and under 23 years old as of 31 December of the playing season may play up a division within their club without restriction in NIHL.
- A player who is over 23 years old as of 31 December of the playing season may play up a maximum of three times to the higher division team. Should they play up an additional time then will be automatically transferred to the higher division team.
- No player may play down to a lower division, however a player may be transferred to a lower division. In this instance, the player will not be granted dispensation to play up after the transfer has taken place.

In NIHL where a club does not have a team in a higher division, or a development opportunity, a player in a lower division may play for another club in a division higher than the club they are registered for. For this purpose SNL teams will be treated as NIHL 1. The following restrictions apply:

- Any player who is under 23 years old as of 31 December for that season may play up a division for another club without restriction.
- A player who is over 23 years old as of 31 December for that season may play up a division maximum of three times to the higher division club. Should they play up a fourth time then will be automatically transferred to the higher division club.

Players who play up under these provisions must play with one team in a higher division only, unless dispensation to transfer has been given by EIH.

6.4.5.2 'Playing up' an age group

Junior players may play up one age group. Junior players may not play down an age group. The following rules also apply:

- Players who are aged 16 or over on the date of the fixture may play up to any division in the NIHL.

Under 18 players must fulfil their responsibility to the teams in their age group unless a club agreement has been reached. However, such club agreements will be void where a scheduled U18 league game will not take place due to lack of players. In such circumstances the junior player must fulfil their responsibilities to the age grade team.

6.5 Dispensation from minimum bench strength

A team may request exemption from minimum bench strength for an individual fixture. For NIHL, dispensation will be granted as follows: 10 + 1.

All dispensation from minimum bench strength requests must be made in writing to EIH at least two days prior to the fixture concerned. Approval must be received from EIH in writing.

Teams are permitted to borrow Bench Team Officials from other teams but must meet the minimum bench strength as outlined in the *Match-day protocols*. Priority must be given to the Bench Team Official's primary club in the event of a fixture clash.

Failure to obtain permission will result in the match being played as a challenge game and the match assessed under *failure to fulfil a fixture*.

6.6 NIHL competitions

All EIH sanctioned games and tournaments must abide by the Rules of Ice Hockey as described by the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF). Rules can be found at: <https://www.iihf.com/en/statchub/4719/rules-and-regulations>

In addition, EIH specifies some amendments as outlined in this section. Where this section contradicts IIHF rules, EIH rules will take precedence.

Note: EIH participants are only insured through EIH insurance when the game or tournament has been sanctioned or approved by EIH.

6.7 League identity and structure

All EIH leagues are solely owned and operated by EIH.

The NIHL season runs from September to April. League formats are finalised by 31 May prior to the beginning of the new season to ensure the optimal development structure for all teams. The total number and distribution of home and away matches played by each team will be defined on an annual basis for each section and identified in *Appendix 6a*.

The 2023-2024 league structure is outlined below.

- Planet Ice National Ice Hockey League (PINIHL)
- National Ice Hockey League Division 1 North (NIHL1 North Moralee)
- National Ice Hockey League Division 2 South (NIHL 1 South Britton)
- National Ice Hockey League Division 2 North (NIHL 2 North Laidler)
- National Ice Hockey League Division 2 South (NIHL 2 South Wilkinson)
- Divisional League Cup

League matches will take precedence over cup ties, with the exception of NIHL cup finals and playoffs which may be organised in place of a junior or WNIHL league fixture.

6.7.1 Divisional playoffs

Once all regular season games have been completed, qualifying teams will compete in league playoffs.

The full format of the NIHL playoffs can be found in *Appendix 6b*.

6.7.2 Championship games

An NIHL Division 1 Championship Game will be contested between the winners of the North Division and South Division at the end of the regular season, to be played during the NIHL National League Finals weekend at a neutral venue.

An NIHL Division 2 Championship Game will be contested between the winners of the North Division and South Division at the end of the regular season, to be played during the NIHL National Division 1 Finals weekend at a neutral venue.

Note: this is not the winners of the divisional playoffs.

6.7.3 League cup format

Each NIHL also has a league cup.

6.7.3.1 PINIHL league cup

The first regular league home and away fixtures against each team will also count towards the League Cup group stage.

The top four teams from the group stage will progress to the semi-finals of the cup, played across two legs over one weekend at each team's venue.

The winners of the semi-finals will progress to the League Cup Final, to be played across two legs over one weekend at each team's venue.

6.7.3.2 NIHL Division 1 league cup

NIHL 1 North and NIHL 1 South hold a league cup within each league. The first regular league home and away fixtures against each team will also count towards the League Cup group stage.

The top four teams from the group stage will progress to the semi-finals of the cup, played across two legs over one weekend at each team's venue.

The winners of the semi-finals will progress to the League Cup Final, to be played across two legs over one weekend at each team's venue.

6.7.3.3 NIHL Division 2 league cup

Eight regular season league games for each team in the NIHL Division 2 North and South will also count towards a separate league cup table, known as the 'group stage' of the league cup.

League cup finals will be contested by the top four teams at the end of the league cup group stage standings.

Where there is only a single group, the first ranked team will play the fourth ranked team and the second ranked team will play the third ranked team. Where there are two groups, the winners of one group will play the runners up of the second group and vice versa.

Semi-finals and finals will be played across a home and away leg at each team's venue.

6.7.4 Challenge Cup

NIHL leagues are permitted to take part in extra fixtures in the form of a Challenge Cup if approved and sanctioned by EIHL.

6.7.5 Promotion and relegation

There is no promotion or relegation in any league for NIHL.

6.7.6 Acceptance of new clubs and teams into the NIHL league structure

Where a league has two or more divisions, during each off-season EIH will review the make-up of each division in consultation with clubs. There may be a window of opportunity for clubs to apply to move between divisions.

Entering a second or third team in any age group is at the discretion of EIH, subject to ice time agreements being agreed with the venue.

New teams wishing to join an NIHL league must apply in writing to EIH. A new team is accepted, that team must complete the affiliation process as required by EIH for them to have full membership status.

6.8 NIHL game length and format

The length of a match and format is dependent on age group as follows:

Age group	Length	Format
NIHL	3 x 15 or 3 x 20 minute periods	Full ice, contact, stop clock

6.9 League administration

6.9.1 League applications

Prior to each new season, clubs must apply to enter teams into the leagues in advance of 15 May for the following season. By so applying, clubs agree to abide by EIH Rule Book and all other rules and regulations set by the IIHF, IHUK and EIH.

Teams that played in the immediately preceding season are deemed accepted for the following season, providing all outstanding debts have been settled and they meet the re-affiliation criteria outlined. However, they must still formally confirm their intention to continue in the league prior to the season.

Any team that withdraws from a league after the season has begun is liable for a fine of up to £500 at the discretion of EIH, alongside payment of any other fines and outstanding fees. Withdrawal from the league must be made in writing to info@EIH.co.uk by the authorised signatory of the affiliated club.

6.9.2 Awarding of points

Points will be awarded as follows:

- Two points for a regulation win
- Two points for a shoot-out or overtime win
- One point for a shoot-out over overtime loss
- Zero points for a regulation loss

No game shall end in a tie. Where two teams are tied at the end of regulation then there will be five minutes of overtime in a three-on-three format and then game winning shots as specified in the IIHF rules.

There will be no games played for double points in any competition, unless a formal request is made by a team due to exceptional circumstances, including but not limited to a non-fault failure to fulfil a fixture which cannot be rescheduled. In such instance, a team must obtain agreement from the opposing team in writing, submitting this alongside a formal request and reasoning to EIH for approval. EIH reserve the right to refuse any such request.

6.9.3 League standings

The placing of teams in the league table shall be determined using the following criteria in the order below:

- i. Points
- ii. Points in the games between the tied teams
- iii. Overall goal difference in the regular league season
- iv. Overall goals scored in the regular league season
- v. Number of regulations wins
- vi. Overall goal difference in matches between the tied teams
- vii. Fewer penalty points
- viii. Fewer penalty minutes

6.9.4 Administration of fixtures

EIH Fixture Secretary will be responsible for providing the final schedule of fixtures aiming to be at least one month in advance of the season.

For the scheduling of fixtures, teams must provide EIH with enough home ice dates to fulfil all required fixtures for the league season within five working days of being asked. In the interest of fair allocation, teams are asked to specify as many dates as possible. These must be split equally (50/50) between Saturday and Sunday.

Fixtures, as far as possible, will be scheduled on a Saturday or Sunday during the specified season. In the event two teams jointly request to play a midweek fixture, this requires approval from EIH.

On occasion, NIHL teams may be asked to play midweek (Monday to Friday) league or playoff games. This will only be by agreement of both teams concerned, the rink and the league fixtures secretary. For NIHL teams that take part in cup competitions, teams may be *required* to play midweek if no suitable weekend date exists.

All senior hockey games must be scheduled to face off no later than 19:30 on Saturday and Sunday and 20:00 midweek. No team shall be required to undertake a fixture that does not enable its players to arrive back at their home venue by midnight on a Sunday, based on normal traffic conditions. Agreements can be made between clubs with the permission of the relevant fixtures secretary to alter this.

All EIH league fixtures shall take priority over challenge matches, tournaments and exhibitions.

6.9.5 Availability

Teams participating in sanctioned competitions shall make themselves available for all league fixtures in the initial schedule release.

Teams participating in all competitions shall make themselves available on any Saturday or Sunday during the specified season, even on dates they were not originally scheduled to play after the initial fixtures were published. EIH are committed to providing as much notice as possible where this is the case. This does not apply to dates that were excluded before the original fixtures schedule was prepared.

Where a team wishes to avoid a certain date for a fixture allocation, they must submit their request and explanation to EIH Fixture Secretary when providing their ice slots. The

secretary will accept a maximum of three individual requests per team. Whilst every effort will be made to facilitate bona-fide requests, EIH cannot guarantee avoidance of any dates within the season.

6.9.6 Rescheduling of fixtures

EIH will prepare a fixture list at the beginning of the season for each league. Once the fixture list has been confirmed, fixtures can only be rearranged in certain circumstances outside of their control as detailed below:

- Ice is withdrawn by the venue.
- Ice is lost due to a senior team (EIHL and NIHL) fixture. NIHL teams can only take ice from another section when arranging a league cup finals or playoff game and must consult with EIH and affected teams first.
- A clash with any ENTP event or development camp, or IIHF sanctioned international duty:
 - For the avoidance of doubt, a clash is defined as any aforementioned event that occurs on the same day as the fixture, or any day either side of the fixture when the travelling distance between the league fixture and event is more than 150 miles.
 - The clash must affect three or more players and/or one L2 Team Coach (or above) primarily registered to the team involved in the fixture.
 - The request to change the fixture must be made within three working days of the selection of the participants affected, whereby the dates of the event or camp are known. Where the dates of the event or camp are unknown, the request must be made within three working days of confirmation.
- A team may also request a rearranged fixture no later than 28 days in advance where both teams have come to an agreement to reschedule a fixture within EIH season limitations. This must not affect another scheduled EIH fixture and must be approved by EIH before being confirmed. Any incurred costs, such as cancellation of ice time, are payable by the home team.

A team may not otherwise request to reschedule a match, including but not limited to the following reasons:

- Lack of available players, including due to players playing up to another team or other commitments. Dispensation exists to support teams in these instances to enable fixtures to go ahead.
- Lack of available coaches or bench staff. Teams are permitted to borrow coaches to fulfil minimum bench requirements.

In the above approved circumstances, teams involved in the fixture must make every effort to reschedule the game in the spirit of the competition.

6.9.7 Process of rescheduling fixtures

Any request to reschedule a fixture request must be made in writing via the fixture change request form, and within three working days of the issue being identified. EIH must approve any fixture change before it is confirmed; EIH retain the right to refuse any rearrangement.

Any fixture that is unable to be immediately rearranged will be moved to TBA. EIH and the affected teams will make every effort to reschedule the fixture within the season, however, should this not be possible due to ice time availability, the fixture will be cancelled with a 0-0 draw being declared and each team being awarded one point.

For any rejected request, the original fixture stands. If a team fails to attend said fixture, it will be considered as a *failure to fulfil a fixture as per section 6.10* by the offending team.

6.9.8 Postponement of a fixture

A team may request a fixture be postponed. A fixture can only be postponed for reasons outside one or both teams' control as outlined below:

- Ice facility failure as determined by rink management
- Unsafe rink conditions as determined by rink management
 - If teams and officials deem the rink unsafe, but rink management do not, teams should submit supporting evidence to EIH to decide the outcome of the fixture. Teams will still be responsible for costs.
- Medical emergency at venue / fixture as determined by rink management or by the officials in consultation with the team representatives.
- Unforeseen road delays or breakdowns where more than three players and/or one L2 Team Coach are affected.
- An 'Act of God' or severe weather conditions. Note: EIH will use the Met Office National Severe Weather Warning to decide if there is a basis for postponement. The following are accepted for fixture postponement:
 - Travelling from, through or to a red alert area for a fixture.
- Exceptional circumstances, for example, the death of a team member or club official.

Any decision to postpone a fixture must be made in consultation with the team representatives, EIH and the officials and rink management if the postponement occurs on-site. Safety of players shall be a key factor in any decision making.

Both teams must be in agreement that they can accommodate a rescheduled fixture and provide EIH with alternative dates within five working days of the original fixture.

Where a postponement is requested and approved but the fixture cannot be rearranged due to lack of ice time, the fixture will be cancelled with a 0-0 draw being declared and each team being awarded one point.

The team responsible for the postponement of the fixture shall be liable for the costs of the venue hire and referees' travel (if applicable). Any dispute over the team responsible for the postponement and/or the amount of any costs must be referred to EIH within five working days of the original fixture.

A postponement request that is not for one of the reasons given above will be treated in accordance with *section 6.10 Failure to fulfil a fixture*.

6.9.9 Abandonment of a fixture

A game in-progress may be abandoned if it is determined that it cannot continue. All referees and team representatives accept the moral and ethical responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care to all participants and spectators. A game may be abandoned for the following reasons where no team is at fault:

- Ice facility failure as determined only by rink management
- Unsafe rink conditions as determined only by rink management
 - If teams and officials deem the rink unsafe, but rink management do not, teams should submit supporting evidence to EIH to decide the outcome of the fixture. Teams will still be responsible for costs.

- The behaviour of anyone involved puts the welfare of a participant or spectator at risk as determined by rink management. Where this is a team member, the abandoned match will be treated under *section 6.10 Failure to fulfil a fixture* by the offending team or teams.
- Medical emergency at venue / fixture as determined by rink management or by the officials in consultation with the team representatives.

A fixture may also be abandoned solely at the discretion of the referees in the following circumstances:

- A team is not present on the ice 10 minutes after the scheduled face off time and has not agreed a delay or postponement. See *section 8.12 Match-day protocols* for further information regarding late starting matches. Where fault is established, the abandoned match will be treated under *section 6.10 Failure to fulfil a fixture* by the offending team or teams.
- The behaviour of anyone involved puts the welfare of a participant or spectator at risk as determined by the referee. Where this is a team member, the abandoned match will be treated under the *section 6.10 Failure to fulfil a fixture* by the offending team or teams.
- A L2 Team Coach is ejected from a game in progress and there is no suitably qualified Team Official to take over the management of the bench. Please refer to *section 6.11 Match-day personnel* for further guidance. The abandoned match will be treated under the *section 6.10 Failure to fulfil a fixture* by the offending team or teams.

Where no team is at fault for the abandonment of the fixture, the following will apply when declaring a result:

- Where less than 50% of the match has elapsed has been played, a 0-0 draw will be declared with each team being awarded one point.
- Where more than 50% of the match has been played, the result at the point of abandonment will stand.
- No abandoned games will be rearranged, unless exceptional circumstances are evidenced in writing with the agreement from both teams.

6.10 Failure to fulfil a fixture

Any team which, without just cause as defined in the previous sections, fails to fulfil a league or cup fixture will be liable to forfeit the match and may be subject to a fine and reimbursement of the opponent's out-of-pocket costs, including but not limited to, the cost of transportation, ice time, and the cost of referees (if applicable).

Automatic sanctions will be imposed as defined as follows:

- Where one team is at fault, they will forfeit the fixture with the match being awarded 5-0 to the non-offending team. The offending team will be liable to pay a fine as outlined in EIH DOPS Policy as well as reimbursement of incidental costs of the non-offending team.
- Where both teams are at fault, the fixture will be recorded as a 0-0 draw with no points awarded to either team. Both teams will be liable to pay a fine as outlined EIH DOPS Policy.
- Where both teams are deemed not to be at fault, the fixture will be recorded as a 0-0 draw with one point awarded to each team.

The tariff below should be considered as the usual sanction for teams for failing to fulfil a fixture, although the level of sanction remains at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.

Age group	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3	Tariff 4
NIHL 2	£150	£750	£3,000	Expulsion
NIHL 1	£250	£1,000	£4,000	Expulsion
NIHL National	£500	£1,250	£5,000	Expulsion

Tariff 2 will also incur a 2-point deduction for NIHL teams.

Tariff 3 a 4-point deduction for NIHL teams.

For the purpose of clarity, tariffs are generally applied in line with the cumulative number of fixture offences (for example, tariff 1 will normally be applied for a first event). However, the severity of the tariff may be upgraded at the Disciplinary Committee's discretion for reasons, including but limited to, cancellation of a fixture within 24 hours of the match, cancellation of a high-profile fixture or failure to attend without notice.

In addition to the above, the offending team will be held liable to indemnify the non-offending team and the venue operator/rink in respect of any expenses, losses, or costs incurred because of the offending team's actions. For EIHL to support any such financial claim(s) from a non-offending team, supporting documentation must be provided on request and approved by EIHL as outlined in section *Satisfactory supporting documentation*.

Should a team be removed from a competition, the results of all of their games shall be expunged from the record of any competition that the team has taken part in.

6.10.1 Satisfactory supporting documentation

EIHL reserves the right to request evidence to support the rescheduling, postponement or abandonment of any fixture, including but not limited to confirmation of an ice facility failure from the rink, evidence of traffic issues, evidence of breakdown and/or evidence of severe weather. Evidence must be provided within five working days of the request.

In the event satisfactory documentation is not provided, and the fixture is unfulfilled, the fixture may be awarded as the fault of the team failing to provide the required documentation.

In addition, to support a claim for any incidental costs to be recovered by a non-offending club from the offending club, they will require supporting documentation to be provided, including but limited to, a copy of an invoice for venue hire, a copy of the ice rink's cancellation policy and ice-time contract with the team, a copy of the invoice for transportation and associated cancellation policy. In the event documentation is not deemed satisfactory by EIHL, the claim for reimbursement of costs will not be supported.

EIHL reserve the right to confirm what is and what is not deemed as satisfactory documentation.

6.11 Match-day personnel requirements

The match-day personnel requirements outlined below apply to all EIHL sanctioned competitions, including challenge games. Failure to meet any of the standards outlined in this section may result in disciplinary action under EIHL DOPS Policy.

6.11.1 Minimum bench strength: players

To be eligible for EIH-sanctioned competitions, players must be registered with EIH to the club and team they are playing for prior to the day of the fixture.

The minimum bench strength for NIHL teams is 10 skaters plus 1 netminder, unless dispensation has been granted as per *section 6.4*. The maximum matchday roster is 20 + 2.

Within the match-day squad, there can be a maximum of 16 players aged over 23 and non-British trained (maximum of 3 non-British trained within these limits). All other players must be under the age of 23 and meet all other eligibility criteria for NIHL matches.

In the event of players arriving late, a game can be started with six players, but the full minimum bench strength as defined in the above table must be reached by the start of the second period. These players must be dressed and at the team bench ready to participate at the start of the second period.

Failure to meet the minimum bench requirements will be classified as a *failure to fulfil the fixture*: any breaches of the required number of players will result in the game automatically being awarded 5-0 to the non-offending team. Where both teams are in breach, the match will be awarded as 0-0 with no points for either team.

The match may go ahead as a challenge game should this be deemed safe by the L2 Team Coaches and IHUK officials.

Should any game be called off due to insufficient players, the players registered to the responsible team shall not be allowed to participate in any other domestic fixture that day in any other section.

6.11.1.1 Icing non-British / non-British trained players

In NIHL and SNL games a team may only dress three players who are classed as non-British trained, with no restriction on the ice at any given time.

For any infraction of this rule, the Referee will assess a Bench Minor Penalty announced as “too many non-British trained players on the ice” and recorded as “too many non-Brit”.

Clubs within the NIHL National Division also participate in a voluntary self-restriction that only goalkeepers that are British-trained may be used.

6.11.2 Minimum bench strength: Coaches and Managers

All bench staff, including player-coaches, must be named on the team list and the appropriate license number provided. Registered coaches and managers must display their licenses for the duration of the game. No person under the age of 18 can take control of the bench.

At the start of each game, each team must delegate a person in charge of the bench who is at least a (non-playing) L2 Team Coach, qualified and licensed by EIH. In addition, each bench must also have a (non-playing) L1 Assistant Coach or above, or a Team Manager, qualified and licensed by EIH.

If the L2 coach in charge of the bench is ejected from or leaves the game, another L2 coach must take charge. Where there are no alternative options, should the team have a suitably qualified L2 player coach, they are permitted to take over the bench, provided they do not return to the ice as a player for the remainder of the game and they are denoted on the team

list as a player coach prior to the start of the game. L1 coaches and team managers are not permitted to take charge of the bench under any circumstances.

Failure to meet the minimum match-day team official requirements will be classified as a *failure to fulfil the fixture*.

Should any game be called off due to insufficient team bench officials, those registered to the responsible team shall not be allowed to participate in any other domestic fixture that day in any other section.

6.11.3 Off-Ice Officials

It is mandatory for all matches to have the following off-ice officials, qualified and licensed through EIH*.

- One scorekeeper (with up to two assistants)
- One timekeeper
- One announcer
- Two penalty box attendants aged over 18
- Two goal judges aged over 18
- Equipment manager

It is *recommended* that each team has an equipment manager and a trained and EIH registered medical professional on the bench at all times. This is not a mandatory requirement.

Off-ice officials should, where possible, aim to arrive 30 minutes prior to game time to commence their duties.

*In the circumstance whereby the game cannot go ahead with licensed off-ice officials, EIH will permit the one-off use of emergency volunteers not licensed with EIH. This should only be used in exceptional circumstance and any off-ice official regularly undertaking duties as identified above must register directly with EIH.

6.11.4 On-Ice Officials (Referees)

On-ice officials (commonly referred to as referees) are assigned by IHUK Referee section based on EIH fixtures list. EIH communicate directly with IHUK Referee section to facilitate this.

If the referees fail to arrive for a fixture, the home club must contact EIH and EIH referee section at fixtures@ihukreferee.co.uk for permission for the game to go ahead. An EIH registered L2 Team or L1 Assistant Coach from each team must take responsibility for the officiating of the game. In this circumstance, the coaches can still be counted towards bench strength.

Referees are required to check minimum bench strength and coach registrations before all games. If there are insufficient players or coaching staff on the bench as outlined in the previous section, the game will be abandoned; referees cannot and must not allow a game to start or continue where the minimum bench coaching requirement is not fulfilled.

6.11.4.1 Payment of On-Ice Officials

Referees are reimbursed according to the schedule outlined in *Appendix 6f*.

For NIHL matches, referee payments are administered by EIH. NIHL clubs are invoiced monthly in arrears for referees' fees, which must be paid within 14 days.

The match-day protocols apply for any EIH sanctioned competition, including league games, cup games, Challenge matches and tournaments, camps or exhibitions held under the jurisdiction of EIH.

Failure to pay will mean that all EIH and IHUK Referee services, including provision of referees, are revoked until payment is received. Any fixture that falls within this period will be cancelled and deemed as a *failure to fulfil a fixture*, with the non-paying team at fault.

6.12 Match-day protocols

The match-day protocols outlined below apply to all EIH sanctioned competitions, including challenge games. Failure to meet any of the standards outlined in this section may result in disciplinary action under EIH DOPS Policy.

6.12.1 Changing rooms

It is mandatory that all venues provide players with a suitably equipped changing area. Where possible, these facilities should be separate from those used by members of the public.

6.12.2 Risk assessment and Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

All clubs must undertake a risk assessment of the venue, ensuring compliance within their terms and conditions of hire from their respective facility, to ensure that recommended guidance is followed in relation to the provision of a safe environment for attendees of matches including all players, staff, volunteers and spectators. The risk assessment will determine the appropriate level of cover required and should be in line with guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive for the safe operation of sports events. All venues also require an emergency action plan (EAP).

Such documents must be shared with the visiting team and supplied to EIH in request.

6.12.3 Medical standards

The following minimum standards are required for all EIH fixtures:

- First aider
- First aid kit (checked before each game)
- Risk assessment (shared with visiting team)
- Emergency action plan (shared with visiting team)
- A telephone to summon the emergency services

It is recommended that a professional medical practitioner is available for supporting the medical requirements of participants within any EIH competition. This person must be registered with EIH and the club and must be named on the gameday team list.

To be considered a professional practitioner by EIH, the individual must:

- Be a graduate in an appropriate discipline
- Be a registered member of an appropriate professional body
- Possess professional indemnity insurance
- Hold a NQF Level 3 or higher first aid qualification

Persons in the following categories who also have appropriate experience and training in immediate care (as represented by a NQF Level 3 first aid qualification) are likely to meet the requirement:

- Doctor registered with the GMC
- Nurse registered with the NMC
- Physiotherapist registered with the HCPC
- Paramedic registered with the HCPC
- Sports rehabilitator registered with BASRaT
- Sports therapist registered with the Society of Sports Therapists
- Sports massage therapist registered with the Sports Massage Association
- Osteopath registered with the GOC
- Chiropractor registered with the GCC

An ambulance is not required to be on-standby at the venue, although the necessity for this should be determined by the team's risk assessment and emergency action plan, taking into account the proximity of the venue to local advanced medical services.

It is considered acceptable that medical cover may be used to provide for both spectators and participants, dependent on event guidance published by the HSE, however the number of individuals capable of emergency and advanced first aid will take into account the specific risk factors of the venue, its capacity and its history of incidents.

Medical risk assessments should be reviewed after any major incident to identify improvements required for future events and activities.

6.12.4 PA system

All NIHL sanctioned competitions must have an adequate PA system where possible to ensure game announcements can be made accordingly.

6.12.5 Stewarding standards

All EIH sanctioned competitions must be effectively stewarded in line with [HSE guidance for the delivery of running events safely](#). NIHL2 clubs are expected to apply common sense where official stewarding is not necessary and should follow the guidance below as appropriate and realistic as defined by a risk assessment.

Ice hockey specific guidance from EIH is as follows:

- Game night stewards should be prominent to everyone by wearing bright coloured jackets or sweaters in order that they are recognised as stewards.
- Players entering or leaving the ice or their dressing rooms should have a clear passageway to do so without interference from the general public.
- Game officials should be provided with adequate stewarding while entering or leaving the ice or dressing room before, during and after games.
- Team benches should be protected from the general public.
- The penalty area should be protected from the general public.

In areas where netting is used, members of the public must not be allowed to manhandle players or officials at any time. Adequate stewarding should be made available to ensure this does not occur.

Off-ice game officials: goal judges, timekeepers etc., should not be interfered with during the course of the game.

- It is advised that in all arenas, an advertisement in the programme, announcement over the public address system or a warning on the wall is used to advise the general public of the dangers of being struck by the puck or sticks.
- It is the responsibility of the home team to ensure that all events are effectively stewarded, and that spectators and participants have appropriate protection and where necessary segmentation to support a safe environment.
- Briefings and supporting documentation should be provided to stewards to ensure that they are clear on their roles and the lines of responsibility that exist in the venue. All events will ordinarily have a lead steward or person that has overall responsibility for the safe operation of the event. This may be within a club, part of the event management team or a member of venue staff.

The roles and responsibilities should be in line with [HSE guidance on managing crowds safely](#).

Where an incident occurs, a club should review its guidance for stewarding to ensure that lessons are applied to future events and activities.

Where reports of incidents are made to the league, an investigation may take place to ensure that preventative actions are put in place. Where a club fails to do so or has not put any measures in place to ensure the safety of those attending events, a disciplinary panel may take action under bringing the game into disrepute.

6.12.6 Equipment and kit

The IIHF rules apply, with the following amendments as confirmed in *section 4 Skaters' Equipment*.

Shirts must be worn in accordance with the jersey numbers identified on the official team list.

Any EIH registered player on the bench, regardless of whether they are playing, must be dressed in full kit, including helmet.

Coaches and bench team officials must adhere to the kit requirements outlined in the section *Coaching Protocols*.

6.12.7 Kit clash

In the event of a colour-clash between uniforms, it is the home team's responsibility to resolve the clash by wearing an alternative colour.

If the clash cannot be resolved, the match will be classified as *failure to fulfil the fixture*: any breaches of the required number of players will result in the game automatically being awarded 5-0 to the non-offending (visiting) team.

The game can be completed as challenge game.

6.12.8 Arrival procedure

Relevant representatives of each team must arrive at the game venue a minimum of 60 minute to the face of time of that fixture. Relevant representatives shall be the team coaches or manager.

The relevant representatives of both teams should, where possible, attend a meeting in the officials' changing room if required, which shall take place 40 minutes before Face Off,

where the officials and both teams will have the opportunity to discuss the upcoming game raise any concerns.

The scorer for a game should initiate a game countdown as outlined within the IIHF Rulebook.

The countdown will run from prior to warm-up through to the start of the game in line with the game timings that may be adjusted by the home club or age group as needed to accommodate agreed activities.

The game countdown will not be stopped except with the express permission of the on-ice officials due to exceptional circumstances with a penalty for a late face off as outlined within the rules of competition.

6.12.9 60-minute countdown

All NIHL teams must implement a 60-minute countdown to games so that visiting teams know when they are due to be on the ice for warm-up and game start and to also makes sure that games start at the published Face Off Times.

Please see below for a running schedule. This countdown needs to be displayed in the scoreboard pregame. Failure to start a game on time means the team holding up game start time will be assessed a two-minute delay of the game penalty, unless deemed a reasonable reason with the referee.

Table for game start countdown

Time to Face Off	Action
60:00	Horn Sounds and Game Countdown Starts
45:00	Home Team needs to submit the Official EIHA teamlist to the scorer
43:00	1 Horn Blast – 3 mins to warm up
42:00	2 Horn Blasts – 2 mins to warm up
40:00	Team enter the ice for warm up - <i>The clock will start regardless if you are on the ice or not.</i>
30:00	Away Team needs to submit the Official EIHA teamlist to the scorer
20:00	Warm up Ends Promptly – <i>Any players who do not leave the ice promptly may be liable to a 2 min delay of the game penalty</i>
06:00	On Ice Officials enter Ice
05:00	Away Team enters ice
04:00	Home Team enters ice
00:30	Starting line ups to centre ice
00:00	GAME START

6.12.10 National anthems

EIH shall only recognise the playing of the national anthem of the country of the host club, though it is recommended that all anthems be treated with respect. The playing of the anthem is the option of the home club.

Please note, a club may only play the national anthem if the game is likely to face off on time. All players aged U18 or any mascots for any age bracket must wear their helmet at all times.

Players are required to stand still during the playing of any national anthem. The scraping of skates during the national anthem is unacceptable. Players may not skate away until the completion of the national anthem and until they have replaced their helmets.

For any breaches of the above, the referee may assess the offending player a *Misconduct Penalty*.

6.12.11 Late start

If the game does not face off within 10 minutes of the published face off time, if a team is responsible for the delay, it will be assessed a *Bench Minor Penalty for Delay of Game*. Below are some examples of where penalties should and should not be considered.

Situations where a penalty should be considered:

- The home team submitted the incorrect or unrealistic face off time in the referee's opinion.
- No appropriately qualified coach or manager is available to start the game.
- Face off is delayed due to home or away team not getting off the warm-up.
- Repairing of goal net. It is the home team's responsibility to ensure the nets are fit for purpose after the warm-up.

Situations where a penalty should not be considered:

- Excessive fan attendance queues and the away team agree to delay the face off time.
- There is an issue with the public session such as an injury, the ice surface or rink facilities, which requires the rink staff to carry out remedial work. This issue must be brought to the attention of the referee as soon as possible.
- A player was injured in a previous game that needed medical treatment. A player is injured during the warm-up that needed medical treatment.
- Fog or mist in building.
- The goalkeeper of either team or the coach of the away team is late due to traffic delays, and they have informed the opposition.
- Late face off due to late arrivals of referees.

If the game cannot be completed due to limited ice time it will be assessed under *Abandonment of a Fixture*.

6.13 Match-day administration

The match-day administration requirements outlined below apply to all EIH sanctioned competitions, including challenge games. Failure to meet any of the standards outlined in this section may result in disciplinary action under EIH DOPS Policy.

6.13.1 Contacting the opponent

The home team must contact the visiting team at least three working days in advance of a fixture to confirm the following:

- Venue address
- Face Off time
- Jersey colours
- Key contacts for any issues on the day
- **Emergency action plan**

6.13.2 Team lists

For all fixtures, a team list must be produced in the format provided by EIH, including the details of all players and coaches/managers/off-ice team bench officials taking part. Player-coaches must be listed separately as both a player and an off-ice official.

A paper copy of the team sheet must be signed by the L2 Team Coach in charge of the bench. Both teams' team lists must be presented, signed, to the referees no later than 20 minutes prior to face-off.

Failure to provide an accurate team list will mean the game is classified as *failure to fulfil a fixture*. The match may go ahead as a challenge game.

6.13.3 Icing an ineligible player

Should a team ice an ineligible player the game will be classified as *failure to fulfil a fixture*. The match may go ahead as a challenge game.

Ineligible players include, but are not limited to:

- Any player not stated on the team list.
- Any player not registered with EIH.
- Any player not registered to the team competing in the fixture, unless dispensation has been granted in writing by EIH.
- Any player who is currently suspended by EIH, IHUK or IIHF.

6.13.4 Ineligible Coaches, Managers and Off-Ice Team Bench Officials

Should a team list an ineligible team bench official, the game will be classified as *failure to fulfil a fixture*. The match may go ahead as a challenge game.

Ineligible coaches, managers and off-ice team bench officials include, but are not limited to:

- Any coach, manager or off-ice team bench official not stated on the team list.
- Any coach, manager or off-ice team bench official not registered with EIH.
- Any coach, manager or off-ice team bench official without the correct EIH licence / qualification.
- Any coach, manager or off-ice team bench official who is currently suspended by EIH, IHUK or IIHF.

Note: Coaches, managers and off-ice team bench officials can be borrowed from other clubs without the need for prior approval from EIH, provided they are suitably qualified to meet the minimum team official bench requirements. However, in the case of a fixture clash, priority must be given to the team bench official's primary registered team.

6.13.5 Game sheets

It is the home team's responsibility to complete a game sheet in the format stipulated by EIH. It is recommended that a paper game sheet also be available for completion in case of any failures with the electronic gameday system. The completed game sheet must be presented to the match referee at the end of the game for sign-off.

It is the collective responsibility of both teams and the match officials to check that the game sheet is accurate.

The signed-off game sheet, whether paper or digital, must be provided to EIH no later 23:59 on the day the fixture was played. EIH must be informed if there is any reason for a delay of submission.

Teams must retain associated paperwork such as the team sheets and shots on goal records for the remainder of the season and make them available to EIH if requested.

It is the responsibility of the home team to ensure that all league fixtures are recorded for player safety and discipline purposes. Any failure to record the game must be notified to EIH by email to info@eiha.co.uk with an explanation of the reason why.

Failure to provide the required game sheet will result in the fixture being classed as *failure to fulfil a fixture*.

6.13.6 Objection to results

A club wishing to object to the result of a match shall:

- Send an email to EIH Office within two working days of the conclusion of the match, stating the full grounds on which the objection is made.
- Send, within two working days, a non-refundable administration fee of £40.00 to EIH.

For the avoidance of doubt, a club shall not be entitled to object to a result on the ground of a referee's decision(s), and the imposition of a fine or other penalty on a club pursuant to these rules.

6.13.7 Recording of matches

Every NIHL game, including challenge games, should be video recorded and uploaded onto the NIHL Video Library/Instat by 10pm on the Monday following the fixture so these can be made available to DOPS panels. Should a NIHL game is played midweek, the video recording should be uploaded within 24 hours of the game. It is the duty of the home team to ensure the game is adequately filmed as outlined in *Appendix 6c*.

All recording must also take place in conjunction with EIH's Filming and Photography Policy as outlined in the *Safeguarding* section.

Failure to record games and upload them within 48 hours will be assessed under the sanctions outlined in the *Appendix Off-ice sanctions* unless a bona-fide reason, including but limited to hardware failure, is evidenced.

6.13.8 Injury reporting

EIH is strongly committed to ensuring the safety and integrity of ice hockey and all those who participate in the sport. To ensure the continued safety of all members, EIH require data of injuries sustained across the sport so that trends can be identified and reported to EIH Board. It is imperative that EIH collects this data in order to influence rules changes and improve the safety of the sport.

All clubs are required to complete EIH online 'Injury Report Form' following injuries sustained that require one or more of the following:

- Treatment deemed as moderate or serious by the trained First Aider or Medical Team Bench Official
- Any injury resulting in hospital treatment
- Any potential concussion

- Any injury resulting in subsequent visit(s) to a GP

In addition, all clubs have a responsibility to record any injuries using accident report forms/accident books. Accident reports should be stored for a minimum of 10 years or until the individual is 25 years old if they are aged U18 at the time of the injury. All personal information should be processed, stored and retained in accordance with both the Club's Privacy Notice and data protection policies.

In the event of an injury, insured clubs will be liable for the actions of its members.

All clubs associated with EIH have a duty of care towards young people in the sport. It is essential that a young person's parent or guardian is informed of any injury a child sustained whilst participating in hockey activity. Clubs should ensure that the individual(s) responsible for the delivery of hockey activity have access to relevant medical information and that parent/guardian contact details are readily available in case of an emergency for all junior players and stored in accordance with all relevant data protection legislation.

EIH takes the safety of its members extremely seriously and for this reason. In the event that a member club fails to complete EIH online 'Injury Reporting Form' for any injury which meets the criteria outlined in EIH Injury Reporting Policy, or fails to comply with the terms of affiliation, EIH reserves the right to review the affiliation status of the club in question and/or consider disciplinary action under EIH DOPS policy.

6.13.9 Additional reports

In addition to any reports due pursuant to other provisions of EIH Rule Book, each referee shall ensure that they provide a full and comprehensive report of any incident which occurs before, during or after any match, including but not limited to:

- A breach of any game day protocols
- Crowd misbehaviour
- Misbehaviour of club officials
- Any other matter which may bring the game into disrepute

Any such reports must be provided by 12:00 noon on the first Monday following the fixture.

6.14 Discipline

For all matters under this section please refer to the separate EIH DOPS document which is available on EIH website (www.eiha.co.uk).

It is the responsibility of all clubs to maintain their own records of disciplinary points accrued by team members and coaching staff.

Any player or coach receiving a suspension in any game will be suspended from all hockey they are eligible to participate in until the suspension is served at the level at which it was received. Where this a player/coach, they are suspended from both roles until the suspension is served.

If a team withdraws from a fixture and that fixture is awarded then the game will count towards any suspensions in the opposing team, but not the withdrawing team's.

Teams will be subject to further penalty for not adhering to sanctions and suspensions imposed by the disciplinary system.

Appendix 6a: NIHL league structure 2023/2024

The following league structures apply in 2023/2024.

Planet Ice National Ice Hockey League

Division	PINIHL
Games	32
Format	2H & 2A against all teams
Start date	9 September 2023
End date	24 March 2024
Playoffs	Top 8 teams
Playoff dates	QF: 30-31 March 2024 SF: 6 April 2024 F: 7 April 2024
Cup games	16 (H & A against all teams)
Cup final	24-25 February 2024
Clubs	Bees Bristol Pitbulls Hull Seahawks Leeds Knights MK Lightning Peterborough Phantoms Raiders Sheffield Steeldogs Solway Sharks Swindon Wildcats Telford Tigers

NIHL leagues

Division	NIHL 1 North	NIHL 1 South	NIHL 2 North	NIHL 2 South
Games	32	28	32	24
Format	2H & 2A against all teams	2H & 2A against all teams	2H & 2A against all teams	1H & 1A against all teams
Start date	9 September 2023	9 September 2023	9 September 2023	9 September 2023
End date	24 March 2024	24 March 2024	24 March 2024	24 March 2024
Playoffs	Top 8 teams	Top 8 teams	Top 8 teams	Top 8 teams
Playoff dates	QF: 30-31 March 2024 SF: 6 April 2024 F: 7 April 2024	QF: 30-31 March 2024 SF: 6 April 2024 F: 7 April 2024	QF: 30-31 March 2024 SF: 6 April 2024 F: 7 April 2024	QF: 30-31 March 2024 SF: 6 April 2024 F: 7 April 2024
Champs date	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Cup games	16 (H & A against all teams)	16 (H & A against all teams) & Challenge Cup (1H & 1A)	16 (H & A against all teams)	16 (H & A against all teams)
Cup final	24-25 February 2024	24-25 February 2024	24-25 February 2024	24-25 February 2024
Clubs	Billingham Stars Blackburn Hawks Deeside Dragons Hull Jets Nottingham Lions Sheffield Scimitars Solihull Barons Whitley Warriors Widnes Wild	Chelmsford Chieftains Invicta Dynamos Milton Keynes Thunder Oxford City Stars Romford Buccaneers Slough Jets Solent Devils Streatham Redhawks	Altrincham Aces Billingham Buccaneers Bradford Bulldogs Coventry Blaze 2 Kingston Sharks Nottingham Lions 2 Sheffield Titans Sutton Sting Telford Tigers 2	Basingstoke Buffalo Bristol Pitbulls 2 Cardiff Fire Chelmsford Warriors Guildford Phoenix Haringey Huskies Invicta Mustangs Lee Valley Lions Oxford Rising Stars Peterborough Phantoms 2 Solent Junior Devils Streatham Blackhawks Swindon Wildcats 2

Appendix 6b: NIHL playoffs 2023/2024

All games will be played in accordance with the normal domestic rules as outlined in EIHL Rule Book, with the following exceptions.

6b.1 Attendance and format

Participation at the NIHL Playoffs is mandatory. Any team failing to participate will start the following season with a 10-point deduction.

Matches will be played at a neutral venue to be determined by EIHL over one weekend. The schedule will be as follows:

PINIHL playoffs

League playoffs will be contested between the top eight teams at the end of the regular season.

Teams will be split into two groups of four and play home and away legs against each team in their group. The top two teams from each group will progress to the semi-finals. The semi-finals and final will be played across one weekend at a neutral venue in the NIHL National Finals weekend.

A revenue share model is in place for the proceeds of this event.

NIHL Division 1 playoffs

Divisional playoffs will be contested between the top eight teams in each league at the end of the regular season. Matches will be played across a home and away leg at each team's venue. The semi-finals and final will be played across one weekend at a neutral venue in the NIHL National Division 1 Finals weekend.

QF1: 1 v 8

QF2: 4 v 5

QF3: 3 v 6

QF4: 2 v 7

Semi-finals (played on 6 April 2024)

SF1: Winner of QF1 v Winner of QF2

SF2: Winner of QF3 v Winner of QF4

Final (played on 7 April 2024)

Winner of SF1 v Winner of SF2

NIHL Division 2 playoffs

League playoffs will be contested between the top eight teams at the end of the regular season. Quarter-finals will be played across a home and away leg at each team's venue. The semi-finals and final will be played across one weekend at a neutral venue in the NIHL National Division 2 Finals weekend.

Where there are fewer than eight teams, the top four teams will contest the playoffs and move straight to the semi-finals stage.

QF1: 1 v 8

QF2: 4 v 5

QF3: 3 v 6
 QF4: 2 v 7

Semi-finals (played on 6 April 2024)
 SF1: Winner of QF1 v Winner of QF2
 SF2: Winner of QF3 v Winner of QF4

Final (played on 7 April 2024)
 Winner of SF1 v Winner of SF2

The playoff bracket is shown below for NIHL 1 and NIHL 2.



6b.2 Player eligibility

Only players who are deemed to be eligible for the playoffs are able to be listed on the team list in any fixture that is called a 'playoffs' game by EIHL.

To be eligible for the playoffs the following criteria shall apply:

- A player may only play for their primary registered club.
- A player must have played a minimum of 25% of the league fixtures for the team participating in the finals.

- Players who have transferred mid-season from another team must meet the 25% criteria as with any other player. The 25% is from the start of the season NOT from when the player signs for the club.
- Under 23 players who are playing for teams in multiple divisions are eligible for playoff games in multiple divisions, however they must fulfil the 25% criteria as with any other player.
- Players who have turned 16 within the season need only complete 25% of their teams' league fixtures from the date of their 16th birthday, provided that they turn 16 before the start of the playoffs. A player who turned 16 after the end of the regular season but before the playoffs is not entitled to play in any playoff games.

Should a team ice an ineligible player, they team will be expelled from the finals and all results awarded 5-0 to the non-offending team(s).

6b.3 Dispensation

Under the following circumstances, EIH may grant dispensation for a player to compete in the finals:

- Where a team can provide medical evidence that a player missed games solely due to injury and would have reached the 25% had they played in those games.
- Where a player missed games due to an international call-up and would have reached the 25% if they had played in those games, and said international fixtures were played in accordance with Rule 11 of the IIHF International Transfer Regulations.
- Where a team can provide evidence of a cancelled fixture that a player would have competed in and would have reached the 25% had they played in those games.

All dispensations must be approved by EIH in accordance with the normal dispensation procedure. EIH have the right to refuse any dispensation request.

6b.4 Match-day protocols and administration

The normal match-day procedures as outlined in this document apply with the following addition(s):

Discipline

Penalty points and suspensions incurred during National Finals will carry over to the following season. Match reports will be produced for any major offence.

Inappropriate or abusive behaviour, including that likely to cause damage to property or facilities, will not be tolerated. Disciplinary matters will be dealt with on the day by an EIH DOPS Committee, and may result in players being ejected from the event and/or banned from participation in future EIH events. Players causing damage to property or facilities will be liable for costs incurred.

Appendix 6c: NIHL minimum recording requirements

Every NIHL game, including challenge games, should be video recorded and uploaded onto the NIHL Video Library/Instat by 10pm on the Monday following the fixture so these can be made available to DOPS panels. Should a NIHL game is played midweek, the video recording should be uploaded within 24 hours of the game. It is the duty of the home team to ensure the game is adequately filmed within these rules.

The specification for recording equipment within the NIHL is:

Level 1: One wide angled camera at centre ice OR two end zone cameras

Level 2: One wide angled camera at centre ice AND two end zone cameras OR one panning camera at centre ice

Level 3: Two end zone cameras AND one panning camera at centre ice

Level 4: Two end zone cameras AND one panning camera at centre ice plus any other camera angle

For the NIHL, the minimum required quality is as follows:

NIHL National: Level 2 and above

All other divisions: Level 1 and above

All recordings must be digital in nature and Full HD 1080p format at 30 frames per second or higher.

In challenge games between teams from two different divisions, or indeed between a NIHL/SNL club and a team from another section the minimum requirements are that of the home team's division.

A club should record in the game notes the level of filming undertaken for the fixture to ensure this is available upon request.

If at any point in a game, the filming is interrupted, the on-ice official should be informed at the next stoppage. As filming is re-established, the on-ice officials will be informed at the next stoppage. On ice-officials will inform coaches of any change to filming at a stoppage.

A team who fails to adequately record a game or provide video upload the video footage by the set times above to the NIHL Video Library/Instat, the team will be fined as per the tariffs detailed below.

All NIHL Leagues

Tiers	No. of failures	Fine
Tier 1	1 or 2 failures	£100 per failure
Tier 2	3 or 4 failures	£150 per failure plus 5 team penalty points
Tier 3	5 or more failures	£250 per failure, 5 team penalty points & 2-point deduction from the respected league/cup table per offense.

All video footage after 31 days will be removed subject to any active disciplinarys.

Appendix 6d: Summary of minimum squads

League	No. of teams	Squad size by 31 August of playing season
NIHL	1	Min: 11 + 1 Max: 23 + 2 (NIHL National and NIHL1) Max: 28 + 2 / 27 +2 (NIHL2) Max no.s do not include U18s
	2	Min: 22 + 2 Max: 46 + 4 (NIHL National and NIHL1) Max: 54 + 6 (NIHL2) Max no.s do not include U18s

Appendix 6e: Summary or minimum bench strength on match day

League	Players	Bench officials
NIHL*	Min: 11 + 1 [^] Max 20 + 2	L2 Team Coach (non-playing) and Assistant Coach (non-playing) and/or Team Manager

*In the event of players arriving late, a game can be started with six players, but the full minimum bench strength as defined in the above table must be reached by the start of the second period. These players must be dressed and at the team bench ready to participate at the start of the second period. If the required number of players have not joined by this time, the game will be classified as *failure to fulfil a fixture*.

[^]Unless dispensation has been granted as per *section 6.5*

Appendix 6f: On-ice official fees

The following fees are in place for 2023-2024.

League	Total fee (without mileage)	Max mileage	Max mileage fee	TOTAL	Referee fee	Linesman fee	2 Man System
NIHL	£244.00	450	£202.50	£446.50	£73.00	£49.00	N/A
NIHL 1	£155.00	350	£157.50	£312.50	£67.00	£44.00	£77.50
NIHL 2 / WNIHL National	£129.00	300	£135.00	£264.50	£55.00	£37.00	£64.50

Appendix 8g: Contacts

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