

National Ice Hockey League

Rules of Competition

2024-2025



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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.

1. Team Eligibility

- 1.1. 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.

2. Minimum Squads

- 2.1. The minimum number of players, coaches and managers to enter a team in a league must be registered by 24 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.
- 2.2. NIHL teams must have at least 15 squad players for selection for game days.
- 2.3. The maximum number of registered players for one team is 30 players plus netminders including players on 2-way agreements for NIHL1 + 2, Maximum numbers do not include players aged Juniors.
- 2.4. Clubs must have an EIH registered and qualified L2 Team Coach and L1 Assistant Coach available for teams on match days. All clubs are highly recommended to have a registered and qualified medical practitioner. Coaches can be registered elsewhere or shared with another team within the same club.

3. Player Eligibility

- 3.1. To be eligible to for any NIHL competition, the following applies:
 - All players must be registered only with EIH,
 - 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.

- 3.2. In addition, all players must be able to present one of the following:
 - A British passport
 - A Player holds a valid IIHF International Transfer Card. (approved by IHUK)

- 3.3. The eligibility for players competing within the NIHL are categorised as either British or non-British trained. 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.

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

- 3.5. 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.

- 3.6. 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.

- 3.7. A team may register an unlimited number of British and non-British trained players under the above definitions.
- 3.8. 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.cognitoforms.com/EnglishIceHockeyAssociation/NIHLBritishTrainedApplication>

4. Movement of Players

- 4.1. 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)
- 4.2. 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 a Junior player, 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 via the Gameday platform and complete all stages of the approval process.
 - A transfer must be done by 5pm on a Friday.
 - 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.

- 4.3. 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.
- 4.4. 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 detailed above however this is assessed by EIH in accordance with IHUK rules.
- 4.5. A player may register with multiple clubs in the following circumstances:
- A junior player playing up to any senior league team with the primary team's approval. (not restricted to a team within their own club). 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 (born 2002) on the 31 December of the playing season, playing up a division.
 - Any registration granted with multiple clubs will last until the end of the season in which it was issued.
- 4.6. 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.

- 4.7. 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.

- 4.8. 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.
- 4.9. 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.
- 4.10. For international transfers, IIHF deadlines must be followed.
- 4.11. 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.
- 4.12. 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.
- 4.13. 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.

- 4.14. 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 (players born 2002) 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 (born 2001 or earlier) 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.
- 4.15. 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.
- 4.16. In NIHL, 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 (born 2002 or later) 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 (Born 2001 or earlier) 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 EIHL.
- 4.17. Junior players may play up one age group. Junior players may not play down an age group. The following rules also apply:
- 4.18. Players who are aged 16 or over on the date of the fixture may play up to any division in the NIHL.
- 4.19. All Junior registered 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 Junior 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.

5. Dispensation from Minimum Bench Strength

- 5.1. A team may request exemption from minimum bench strength for an individual fixture. For NIHL, dispensation will be granted as follows: 10 + 1.
- 5.2. 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.
- 5.3. 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.
- 5.4. 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. NIHL Competitions

- 6.1. 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/statichub/4719/rules-and-regulations>
- 6.2. In addition, IHUK in House rules specifies some amendments as outlined in this section. Where this section contradicts IIHF rules, IHUK in house rules will take precedence. <https://www.ihukreferee.uk/downloads>
- 6.3. EIH participants are only insured through EIH insurance when the game or tournament has been sanctioned or approved by EIH.

7. League Identity and Structure

- 7.1. All NIHL leagues are solely owned and operated by EIH.

- 7.2. The NIHL season runs from September to April. League formats are finalised by 15th June 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 A.
- 7.3. The 2024-2025 league structure is outlined below.
- Premier 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
 - Divisional Challenge Cups
- 7.4. 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.
- 7.5. Once all regular season games have been completed, qualifying teams will compete in league playoffs.
- 7.6. The full format of the NIHL playoffs can be found in Appendix B.
- 7.7. An NIHL Division 1 Championship Game will be contested between the league winners of the North Division and South Division at the end of the regular season, to be played during the PINIHL National League Finals weekend at a neutral venue.
- 7.8. 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.
- 7.9. The top four teams from the group stage will progress to the semi-finals of the cup, played across two legs aimed to be over one weekend at each team's venue.
- 7.10. 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.

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

8. Promotion and Relegation

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

9. Acceptance of New Clubs and Teams into the NIHL League Structure

- 9.1. Where a league has two or more divisions, during each off-season EIH will review the make-up of each division. There may be a window of opportunity for clubs to apply to move between divisions.
- 9.2. 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.
- 9.3. New teams wishing to join an NIHL league must apply in writing to EIH. A new team will be accepted, if that team must complete the affiliation process and evidence ice time agreements as required by EIH for them to have full membership status.

10. NIHL Game Length and Format

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

	Length	Format
NIHL	3 x 15 or 3 x 20 minute periods	Full ice, checking, stop clock

11. League Administration

- 11.1. 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.

- 11.2. 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.
- 11.3. Any team that withdraws from a league after the season has begun is liable for a fine 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@englandicehockey.com by the authorised signatory of the affiliated club.
- 11.4. Points will be awarded as follows:
- Three 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
- 11.5. No league 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.
- 11.6. There will be no games played for double points in any competition, unless a team requests due to exceptional circumstances, including a non-fault failure to fulfil a fixture which cannot be rescheduled. In such an 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 reserves the right to refuse any such request.
- 11.7. The placing of teams in the league table shall be determined using the following criteria in the order below:
- Points
 - Points in the games between the tied teams
 - Overall goal difference in the regular league season
 - Overall goals scored in the regular league season
 - Number of regulations wins
 - Overall goal difference in matches between the tied teams
 - Fewer penalty points
 - Fewer penalty minutes

12. Fixture Administration

- 12.1. EIH Fixture Secretary will provide the final schedule of fixtures aiming to be at least one month before the season. A league fixtures meeting will be arranged 12th/13th July 2025, which is mandatory for all clubs to have a representative available on the agreed date. Failure to attend will result in fixtures being allocated by the EIH Fixtures secretary and a potential fine for nonattendance.
- 12.2. 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 for both weekend days..
- 12.3. 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.
- 12.4. 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.
- 12.5. 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.
- 12.6. All EIH league fixtures shall take priority over challenge matches, tournaments and exhibitions.
- 12.7. Teams participating in sanctioned competitions shall make themselves available for all league fixtures in the initial schedule release.

- 12.8. 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.
- 12.9. 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.
- 12.10. EIH will work with NIHL clubs to 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.
- 12.11. 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.
- 12.12. 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.
- 12.13. In the above approved circumstances, teams involved in the fixture must make every effort to reschedule the game in the spirit of the competition.

- 12.14. 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.
- 12.15. 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.
- 12.16. 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 1, by the offending team.
- 12.17. 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, including red weather alert area for a fixture.
 - Exceptional circumstances, for example, the death of a team member or club official.
- 12.18. 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.
- 12.19. Both teams must agree they can accommodate a rescheduled fixture and provide EIH with alternative dates within five working days of the original fixture.

- 12.20. 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.
- 12.21. The team responsible for the fixture's postponement shall be liable for the ice time for the game and referees' travel costs (if applicable). If the home team is responsible, they may be liable for any prearranged travel costs incurred by the away team. 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.
- 12.22. A postponement request that is not for one of the reasons given above will be treated in accordance with section 13 failure to fulfil a fixture.
- 12.23. 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.
- 12.24. 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 13 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 13 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 13 Failure to fulfil a fixture by the offending team or teams.

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

- Where less than 2 periods of the match have elapsed has been played, a 0-0 draw will be declared with each team being awarded one point.
- Where more than 2 periods of the match have 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.

13. Failure to Fulfil a Fixture

13.1. 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, the cost of prearranged transportation, game ice time, and the cost of referees (if applicable).

13.2. 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 ice Costs, Pre-arranged transport & officials fees.
- 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.

13.3. 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	£750	£1500	£3,000	Expulsion
NIHL 1	£1000	£2,000	£4,000	Expulsion

- Tariff 1 will also incur a 3-point deduction for NIHL teams.
- Tariff 2 will also incur a 6-point deduction for NIHL teams.
- Tariff 3 will also incur a 10-point deduction for NIHL teams.

13.4. For the purpose of clarity, tariffs will be 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 NIHL Managements discretion for reasons, including but not limited to, cancellation of a fixture within 24 hours of the match, cancellation of a high-profile fixture or failure to attend without notice.

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

14. Satisfactory Supporting Documentation

14.1. EIH 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.

14.2. 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

15. Match Day Personnel Requirements

15.1. The match-day personnel 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.

- 15.2. 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.
- 15.3. 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.
- 15.4. 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 on the team bench ready to participate at the start of the second period.
- 15.5. 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.
- 15.6. The match may go ahead as a challenge game should this be deemed safe by the L2 Team Coaches and IHUK officials.
- 15.7. 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.
- 15.8. In NIHL games a team may only dress two players who are classed as non-British trained, with no restriction on the ice at any given time.
- 15.9. All bench staff, including player-coaches, must be named on the team list and the appropriate license number provided.
- 15.10. Registered & Qualified Bench Strength must be a minimum as follows: -
- Mandatory**
- L2 Team Coach
 - L1 Assistant Coach (or above L2 Team Coach / Player coach)
- Optional Registered Bench Officials**
- Foundation coach
 - Team Manager

- Medical Professional
 - Kit Person.
- 15.11. If the L2 coach in charge of the bench is ejected from or leaves the game, another L2 coach must take charge.
- 15.12. 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.
- 15.13. Failure to meet the minimum match-day team official requirements will be classified as a failure to fulfil the fixture.
- 15.14. 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 ideally over 18
- 15.15. Off-ice officials should, where possible, aim to arrive 30 minutes prior to game time to commence their duties.
- 15.16. 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.
- 15.17. 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.
- 15.18. 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.

- 15.19. 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.
- 15.20. Referees are reimbursed according to the schedule outlined in Appendix D.
- 15.21. 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.
- 15.22. 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.

16. Department of Player Safety

- 16.1. For all matters under this section please refer to the separate EIH DOPS document which is available on EIH website ([https://englandicehockey.com/rules-and-regulations/.](https://englandicehockey.com/rules-and-regulations/))
- 16.2. It is the responsibility of all clubs to maintain their own records of disciplinary points accrued by team members and coaching staff.
- 16.3. Where this a player/coach, they are suspended from both roles until the suspension is served.

Appendix A

National Ice Hockey Leagues

NIHL 1

Division	NIHL 1 North	NIHL 1 South
Games	36	36
Format	2H & 2A against all teams	2H & 2A against all teams
Start date	31st August 2024	31st August 2024
End date	23 March 2025	23 March 2025
Playoffs	Top 8 teams	Top 8 teams
Playoff dates	QF: 29-30th March 2025 SF: 5-6th April 2025 F: 12-13th April 2025	QF: 29-30th March 2025 SF: 5-6th April 2025 F: 12-13th April 2025
Champs date	20 April 2025	20 April 2025
Cup games	4(H & A against all teams)	4(H & A against all teams)
Cup final	22-23 February 2025	22-23 February 2025
Clubs	Billingham Stars Blackburn Hawks Deeside Dragons Hull Jets Leeds Knights 2 Nottingham Lions Sheffield Scimitars Solihull Barons Whitley Warriors Widnes Wild	Cardiff Fire Chelmsford Chieftains Invicta Dynamos Milton Keynes Thunder Oxford City Stars Romford Buccaneers Slough Jets Solent Devils Streatham Redhawks Swindon Wildcats 2

National Ice Hockey Leagues

NIHL 2

Division	NIHL 2 North	NIHL 2 South
Games	26	22
Format	1H & 1A against all teams plus 1H & 1A regional games	1H & 1A against all teams
Start date	31st August 24	31st August 24
End date	23 March 2025	23 March 2025
Playoffs	Top 8 teams	Top 8 teams
Playoff dates	QF: 29-30th March 2025 SF: 5-6th April 2025 F: 12-13th April 2025	QF: 29-30th March 2025 SF: 5-6th April 2025 F: 12-13th April 2025
Champs date	-	-
Cup games	4(H & A against all teams)	4/5 (H & A against all teams)
Cup final	22-23 February 2025	22-23 February 2025
Clubs	Altrincham Aces Billingham Buccaneers Bradford Bulldogs Coventry Blaze 2 Deeside Ducks Kingston Sharks Nottingham Lions 2 Sheffield Titans Sutton Sting Telford Tigers 2	Bristol Pitbulls 2 Cardiff Canucks Chelmsford Warriors Guildford Phoenix Haringey Huskies Invicta Mustangs Lee Valley Lions Oxford Rising Stars Peterborough Phantoms 2 Solent Junior Devils Streatham Blackhawks

Appendix B

NIHL Playoffs 2024/2025

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

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 & potential fine for non-attendance.

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

All NIHL Division 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 for the Finals weekend.

- QF1: 1 v 8
- QF2: 4 v 5
- QF3: 3 v 6
- QF4: 2 v 7

Semi-finals (Home & Away)

- SF1: Winner of QF1 v Winner of QF2
- SF2: Winner of QF3 v Winner of QF4

Final Weekend

Saturday Running Order

- Laidler Play off Final
- Wilkinson Play off Final
- Moralee Play off Final
- Britton Play Off Final

Sunday Running Order

- Division 2 National Champions Final
- Division 1 National Champions Final



Player Eligibility

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

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

- 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.
- Junior Players who have turned 16 can participate without restrictions.

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).

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.

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 C

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 panel. 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 plus 5 team penalty points
Tier 2	3 or 4 failures	£150 per failure plus 10 team penalty points
Tier 3	5 or more failures	£250 per failure, 15 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.

DRS Video Review Process

The DRS video review process is available for NIHL1 and NIHL2 clubs.

Further information can be found in section 24 of the DOPS Rules and Procedures including timescales and steps to take if the video has not been made available to you.

Appendix D

On-Ice Official Fees

League	Total Fee (without mileage)	Max Mileage	Max Mileage Fee	TOTAL
NIHL 1	£155.00	400	£180.00	£335.00
NIHL 2	£129.00	350	£157.50	£286.50

League	Referee Fee	Linesman Fee	2 Man System
NIHL 1	£67.00	£44.00	£77.50
NIHL 2	£55.00	£37.00	£64.50

Appendix E

Contacts

EIH Director in charge of National League, NIHL 1 and NIHL 2

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