

JUNIOR ICE HOCKEY LEAGUE

Rules of Competition 2025-2026

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1. Scope & Interpretation

All EIH-sanctioned games and tournaments must adhere to the [IIHF Rules of Ice Hockey](#)

Where the IIHF rules are supplemented or amended by the **IHUK In-House Rules & Officiating Guidance** (<https://www.ihukreferee.uk/downloads>), the IHUK wording will take precedence for domestic competition.

Order of precedence: IIHF Rules → IHUK In-House Rules → Junior Rules of Competition.

Insurance notice: Participants are covered by EIH insurance **only when** the game, tournament or camp has been formally sanctioned or approved by EIH.

2. League Identity & Structure

Junior leagues are solely owned and operated by EIH. The regular season runs **5th Sep 2025 – 17th May 2026**. League formats and the 2025-26 divisional matrix are set out in Appendix A.

Early start option

- League games may start on or after 31 Aug (before 5 Sep) by mutual written agreement of both teams, subject to confirmed ice availability and all players being registered and eligible.

Midweek fixtures

- Permitted by mutual written agreement of both teams. On agreement, the Home Club must notify EIH (Scheduling/Officiating) so officials can be appointed and systems updated.

Formats & fixtures

- League formats aim to be finalised by 31 May prior to each new season to ensure an optimal development structure.
- The total number of games and home/away distribution for each team is set annually for each section and published in Appendix A.

U10 competitions

- Regional divisions confirmed at the start of each season, based on entries.
- U10 matches are cross-ice and non-league; all other age groups play on full ice.

Points System

<u>Result</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
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Regulation win	3 points
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Regulation draw	1 point
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Regulation loss	0 points
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Double Points & Unfulfilled Fixtures

No double-points games will be played, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. a non-fault failure to fulfil a fixture that cannot be rescheduled).

In such cases, the requesting team must:

- Obtain written agreement from the opposing team, and
- Submit this, with supporting reasons, to EIH for approval.

EIH reserves the right to refuse any request.

If no fixture remains to award double points, the result will be recorded as 0–0, one point each.

Unfulfilled games will be reviewed by EIH and the JMC, in consultation with the league fixtures secretary, before a result is awarded. Permission from EIH must be obtained in advance if a scheduled fixture cannot be played.

League Title Tiebreakers

The placing of teams in the league table shall be determined according to the following criteria, applied in order until the tie is broken:

1. **Total points** earned in the regular season.
2. **Points earned** in games between the tied teams.
3. **Overall goal difference** in games between the tied teams.
4. **Overall goal difference** in the regular season.
5. **Total goals** scored in the regular season.
6. **Number of regulation wins**.
7. **Fewer penalty points** accumulated in the regular season.
8. **Fewer penalty minutes** accumulated in the regular season.

If teams remain tied after all criteria have been applied, the final position shall be determined by the league.

Promotion & Relegation

There is **no promotion or relegation** in any league.

Game Length & Format

Game duration and format for Junior matches are defined as follows:

Age group	Length	Format
U10	TBC - Guidance to be issued ASAP	Cross-ice jamboree, non-checking
U12	3 x 18-minute periods	Full ice, non-checking, running clock
U14	3 x 15-minute periods	Full ice, checking, stop clock
U16	3 x 15 or 3 x 20-minute periods*	Full ice, checking, stop clock
U19s	3 x 15 or 3 x 20-minute periods*	Full ice, checking, stop clock

U16 & U19: Home Team must confirm their match length with the fixtures secretary **before the season starts** and use the **same format all season** (no changes once underway).

U12: Playing format, including line changes, off-side rules, and penalty administration—is set out in **Appendix D**.

League Entry & Affiliation

- **Entry deadline:** Clubs must apply by 31 May each year to enter teams for the following season.
- **Conditions:** By applying, clubs agree to abide by the EIH Rule Book and the rules of IIHF, IHUK, and EIH.
- **Returning teams:** Teams from the previous season are accepted if they:

- Have no outstanding debts, and
- Meet re-affiliation criteria.
They must still formally confirm their intent to participate.
- **New teams:** Must apply in writing to EIH by 31 May and have an ice time agreement in place to fulfil fixtures. Once accepted, the team must complete the EIH affiliation process to gain full membership.
- **Multiple teams per age group:** Entry of a second or third team is at the discretion of EIH, subject to venue ice time agreements.
- **Divisional structure:** Reviewed annually by EIH in consultation with clubs. During the off-season, clubs may request to move divisions.

Withdrawal

- Any team that withdraws after the season begins:
 - Is liable for fines (at EIH discretion), and
 - Must settle all unpaid fees or penalties.
- Withdrawals must be submitted in writing by an authorised club signatory to: info@englandicehockey.com

3. Governance Hierarchy

<u>Level</u>	<u>Body</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
1	EIH Board	Strategic oversight & ratification of rules
2	Junior Management Committee	Day-to-day league ops & discipline referrals
3	Risk & Governance Committee	Rule-change scrutiny; safeguarding audit
4	Club Representatives	Fixtures, operational feedback, voting

4. Season Calendar 2025-26

<u>Date</u>	<u>Milestone</u>
31 May 2025	Expression-of-interest & affiliation deadline
15 Jun 2025	League formats confirmed
5 Sep 2025	Season opens (all divisions)
31 Jan 2026 17:00	Domestic transfer deadline
15 Feb 2026	IIHF ITC deadline (international)

17 May 2026	Regular season ends
31 May 2026	Junior National play-offs (per appendix B)

5. Team Eligibility

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

- **Affiliation & Registration**
 - Complete **EIH affiliation** before entering the following season.
 - Register the **minimum number of players, coaches, and managers** by **30 August** of the playing season. Failure to meet this may result in removal from competitions.
 - Junior teams must have at least **14 registered players including a netminder (13+1)**.
 - To enter two teams at the same age group, clubs must have **26 players including 2 netminders (26+2)**.
 - There is no maximum squad size.
- **Contacts & Administration**
 - Provide **email and telephone details** for a lead contact and fixtures secretary. If these details change during the season, the club must notify EIH and the relevant regional lead without delay.
 - Submit an **expression of interest** to enter by **31 May** each year.
 - Make available sufficient **home ice dates** to fulfil fixtures. Clubs must supply dates to EIH within **five working days** when requested. (Number of required dates is set annually and listed in **Appendix A**.)
- **Finance & Compliance**
 - Settle all **outstanding fines and debts** owed to EIH or EIH-affiliated clubs. Teams with unpaid debts may be **suspended** until cleared.
- **Coaching & Support Staff**
 - Each junior team must have, as a minimum, on match days:
 - **1 x Level 2 Head/Team Coach**
 - **1 x Level 1 Assistant Coach** or an additional Level 2 Coach
 - **Team Manager** is not required on the bench. However, can go on the bench at the discretion of the Head Coach, but is not counted towards.
 - Coaches may be registered with another team in the same club.

- Clubs are strongly recommended to appoint a **registered and qualified medical practitioner**.
- **Additional Teams**
 - Entry of a second or third team is at the **discretion of EI**H. Applications must be made by **31 May** with supporting ice-time agreements.

6. Player Eligibility & Age Rules

To be eligible for any Junior EI H competition, players must:

1. Are registered in **Gameday** to the relevant club/team;
2. Where required, a player must hold a **valid IIHF International Transfer Card (ITC)** approved by **IHUK** before participating. **British citizenship/passport is not a requirement** for junior eligibility.
3. Have no unpaid EI H fines; and
4. Be registered with the correct age group team (see age rules below) by 31 January of the current season.

Exception: U10 players may register at any time during the season.

Senior vs Junior status

A player who registers for senior membership forfeits eligibility to play in any junior team, league, competition, or tournament.

Junior Age Eligibility

Age as of 31/12/2025	Year of Birth	League 2025/2026	Abbrev. 2025/2026	Play up Eligibility
6 or below	2019-2021	Under 10s	U10	N/A
7	2018	Under 10s	U10	U12s*
8	2017	Under 10s	U10	U12s
9	2016	Under 10s	U10	U12s
10	2015	Under 12s	U12	U14s
11	2014	Under 12s	U12	U14s
12	2013	Under 14s	U14	U16s
13	2012	Under 14s	U14	U16s
14	2011	Under 16s	U16	U19s
15	2010	Under 16s	U16	U19s & Seniors**
16	2009	Under 19s	U19	Seniors
17	2008	Under 19s	U19	Seniors
18	2007	Under 19s	U19	Seniors

* Once a player has reached their 7th Birthday

** Once a player has reached their 16th Birthday - Refer to [NIHL Rules of Competition](#).

6.1 ITC Holders

- **Limited ITC:** one-club registration.
 - **Unlimited ITC:** movement options per IHUK rules.
 - Please refer to the [IHUK ITC Policy](#) for further information.
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7. Movement of Players

Player movement during the season may take the form of:

- **Dual registration** (with a secondary club in GameDay)
- **Permanent transfer** (between clubs/teams in GameDay)
- **Emergency transfer** (single-game dispensation, via GameDay + Player Pool Request form)
- **Dispensation** (to play up an age group or division)

Regulations

- All movements must be **approved in GameDay** and agreed in writing by:
 - Primary club, secondary club, player, and (where relevant) parent/guardian.
- Emails between designated club officials and parents/guardians are acceptable evidence.
- Official transfer requests must be submitted via GameDay.
- Applications must be lodged at least **5 days** before a fixture (non-ITC players).
- **EIH eligibility rules apply at all times.**
- All player movement is subject to **EIH approval**; EIH may refuse at its discretion.

Emergency transfers

- Require a [Player Pool Request form](#); no approval will be granted without it.
- Requests must be submitted by the Tuesday prior to the fixture and uploaded to GameDay no later than 5:00pm on the Friday before the fixture for the player to be approved.

Restrictions

- **GB or ENTP boys' players/trialists** from the previous or current season cannot join a second team in their age group without Junior Section GM approval.
- Exception: **netminders**, where a case may be approved.

Sanctions

- Failure to comply renders the player **ineligible** for EIH competitions.

- Any team fielding an ineligible player will be treated as **icing an ineligible player**, with sanctions applied by the **Department of Player Safety (DOPS)**.

7.1 Dual Registration (Two-Way Agreements)

Purpose

Allows a player to be registered with a primary club and a secondary club in limited cases to support development and fixture fulfilment.

When dual registration is permitted

- **Across sections (junior ↔ senior):**
 - A junior may register with a senior team (e.g., NIHL/WNIHL) only where the primary club does not have a team/opportunity at that level.
 - If the primary club later provides a suitable senior opportunity in the same division, the player must transfer from the secondary team (a player cannot play for two teams in the same division).
- **Within the same age group (cross-division):**
 - If the primary club fields only one team in the player's age group (e.g., Division 2 only), the player may also sign for a secondary club's higher division team (e.g., Division 1) in the same age group.
 - Dual registration is not allowed if the secondary club already fields two teams in that age group (Div 1 and Div 2).

Playing up an age group is not covered by dual registration. It requires separate dispensation (see Section 7.3.3: Dispensation—Playing Up).

Priority in a fixture clash

- Primary club has priority in a clash, unless there is written agreement for the player to represent the secondary club for that specific fixture.
- Without written agreement, appearing for the secondary club may render the player ineligible for that game (DOPS sanctions may apply).
- If a primary club releases a player to the secondary club for a clash, the primary club may not borrow from the player pool to replace them.

Agreement & approvals (mandatory)

- A two-way agreement must be completed and approved in GameDay.
- Agreements run to season end unless mutually cancelled.
- **Deadline:** No new two-way agreements after 31 January of the current season.
- All registrations and approvals are via GameDay; EIH approval is required and may be refused at EIH's discretion.
- Player Eligibility rules (Section 6) and minimum age restrictions apply.

Emergency use

- Emergency transfers (single-game dispensation) are separate from dual registration and require a [Player Pool Request form](#).

Example

- Club A has U19 but no NIHL pathway. A 16-year-old U19 at Club A may request dual registration with an NIHL team at another club (subject to the rules above and EIH approval).

7.2 Minimum Bench Strength – Players

Eligibility

- Players must be registered with EIH to the club and team they are representing before matchday.

Bench minimums

- **U14/U16/U19:** 13 skaters + 1 netminder (13+1) minimum, unless dispensation is granted (see Section 7.4).
- **U12:** Minimum 15 skaters and at least 1 netminder. Maximum squad 21 skaters and 2 netminders only where both teams pre-agree to 4-line hockey.

Late arrivals

- **Except U12**, a game may start with 6 players. The full minimum bench (above) must be reached by the start of Period 2; those players must be dressed and on the bench at that time.

Non-compliance & outcomes

- Failure to meet minimums = Failure to Fulfil a Fixture.
- If one team is in breach, the game is awarded to the non-offending team in line with the age group's mercy rule.
- If both teams are in breach: record 0–0, no points.

Challenge game option

- If safe to do so, the fixture may proceed as a Challenge Game with the approval of both Level 2 Team Coaches and the EIH General Manager – Juniors. The game sheet must be clearly marked "CHALLENGE" to ensure it is not subject to unnecessary DOPS review.

Cancellations for insufficient players

- If a game is called off for insufficient players, players registered to the responsible team may not play in any other domestic fixture that day in any section.

Non-British trained players

- No limit on icing non-British trained players in junior competitions.

7.3 Transfers

7.3.1 Domestic Transfers (between clubs/teams)

- A player may transfer during the season with written agreement from the releasing club/team, the receiving club/team, and the player (and parent/guardian where applicable).
- All transfers must be submitted and approved in GameDay.
- Once approved, a transfer is locked for 28 days; no further transfer or dispensation for that player will be granted during the lock.
- Deadline: 31 January (current season) for eligibility in league competitions. Transfers after this date allow participation in challenge games/tournaments only.
- International transfers: IIHF deadlines and procedures apply.

7.3.2 Emergency Transfers (Player/NM Pool – one game)

- Before submitting a request for a player from the player pool, clubs must first demonstrate that they have exhausted all internal options, including players from a lower division team or from the next eligible age group within their own club. Evidence of this may be requested by EIH, and requests without such evidence may be declined.
- Requests are made via the [Player Pool Request form](#); no approval without the form.
- Purpose: short-notice cover to reach minimum bench requirements for a single fixture (standalone matches only).
- A team may request a maximum of two players, or the number required to meet the minimum bench, whichever is greater.
- Approaches directly by clubs to players are not permitted; such players may be excluded from selection.
- Eligibility limits:
 - Normally from the age group below or lower division within the same age group (e.g., U14 Div 1 may borrow U14 Div 2 or U12).
 - Same-division borrowing only in exceptional cases where no other players are available (EIH decision).
 - GB/ENTP players/trialists (current or immediately preceding season), including reserves, cannot be used in the same age group without Junior Section GM approval (exception may be made for netminders).
- Each request is assessed individually; EIH may refuse any request to prevent unfair advantage.

- Requests must be submitted to EIH by the Tuesday before the fixture, and entered into GameDay for approval no later than 5:00pm on the Friday prior to the fixture. Requests received after this deadline will be refused.

7.3.3 Dispensation – Playing Up an Age Group

- Juniors may play up one age group (including junior → senior NIHL/WNIHL), but may not play down.
- Specific minimum ages:
 - **U12:** only players who are 7 years old on the date of the fixture may play up to U12.
 - **Girls to Girls' U16:** Players, including goaltenders, must be **at least 10 years old** to play up into this competition. All requests remain subject to the usual dispensation process and safeguarding checks. Please also consult the **WNIHL Rules of Competition** for any additional provisions.
 - **WNIHL:** girls aged 14+ may play up to any WNIHL division.
 - **NIHL (men):** players aged 16+ may play up to any NIHL division.
- **U19 responsibilities:** U19 layers must fulfil their obligations to their primary age-grade team unless a club agreement exists. If an U19 league fixture would otherwise be unplayed, the player must prioritise U19.
- Due diligence (duty of care): Before selecting a player to play up, clubs must confirm the player is physically and mentally ready. Agreement should be reached between club coaches and parents in advance.
- **Registration:** Any junior playing up to senior or across sections (e.g., WNIHL) must be registered in GameDay with each section. Failure to do so may render the player ineligible.

7.3.4 Dispensation – Playing Across a Division (Div 2 → Div 1)

- Where a club fields teams in two or more divisions in the same age group, a player may play up from the lower division (Div 2 → Div 1) to aid development.
- Playing down a division is not permitted by dispensation.
- A player transferred down a division for injury/safety reasons may not play up again until 28 days after that transfer is completed.

7.3.5 General Provisions

- EIH eligibility rules apply at all times.
- EIH approval is required for all movements/dispensations and may be refused at EIH's sole discretion.
- Failure to follow these procedures renders the player ineligible; any team icing an ineligible player will be sanctioned under DOPS.

7.4 Dispensation from Minimum Bench Strength

When dispensation may be considered

- **U12: No dispensation** (must meet standard minimums).
- **U14 / U16 / U19:** May be granted **down to 12 skaters + 1 netminder (12+1 NM)** for a single fixture.

Before you apply

- Clubs must show **due diligence** by using all available players from **younger age groups** or a **secondary team within the same club** before seeking dispensation.

How to apply

- Submit the request **in writing to EIH at least 2 days before** the fixture.
- Approval must be received **in writing from EIH** before the game.

Bench Team Officials

- Teams may **borrow bench officials** from other teams, but must still meet the **minimum bench requirements** set out in the Match Day Protocols.
- In a fixture clash, priority rests with the **official's primary team**.

Non-compliance

- If permission is **not obtained**, the game will be treated as a **challenge game** and assessed under **Rule 8: Failure to Fulfil a Fixture**.

8. Failure to Fulfil a Fixture

Principle

A team that, **without just cause** (as defined elsewhere), fails to fulfil a league or cup fixture will **forfeit** the match and may be fined and required to **reimburse the non-offending team's reasonable costs** (e.g., ice hire, officials, travel), subject to evidence.

Automatic outcomes

- **One team at fault:**
 - Result: awarded to the non-offending team in line with the **age-group mercy rule**.
 - Sanctions: **fine (tariff below) + cost reimbursement**.
- **Both teams at fault:**
 - Result: **0–0, no points**.
 - Sanctions: **both teams fined** (tariff below).
- **Neither team at fault:**
 - Result: **0–0, one point each**.

- Sanctions: **none**.

Fine tariffs (by age group)

Age group	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3	Tariff 4
U10	N/A	£50	£200	Expulsion
U12	N/A	£50	£200	Expulsion
U14	N/A	£100	£400	Expulsion
U16	N/A	£125	£500	Expulsion
U19	N/A	£125	£500	Expulsion

Points deductions

- **Tariff 2:** -2 points for **U14 and above**.
- **Tariff 3:** -2 points for **U12 & U14**; -4 points for **U16 & U19**.

Tariffs are generally applied **cumulatively** (e.g., Tariff 1 for a first offence), but the **League Management** and **DOPS** may **escalate** where warranted (e.g., cancellation within 24 hours, high-profile fixtures, or no-show without notice).

Costs

The offending team must **indemnify** the non-offending team and, where applicable, the **venue**, for game-specific ice costs and officials' expenses.

Removal from competition

If a team is removed, **all their results are expunged** from the competition record.

8.1 Satisfactory Supporting Documentation

EIH may request evidence to support any **reschedule, postponement, abandonment, or cost claim**. Examples include:

- Rink confirmation of **ice failure/closure**
- **Traffic/breakdown** evidence
- Medical emergencies or Acts of God/severe weather (normally **Red alert level**; in exceptional cases, an **Amber alert** may be considered, subject to EIH approval). Delays impacting 3+ players or a key coach.
- Death of a team member or official.
- For cost claims: **game-specific invoices**, rink **cancellation policy/contract**, **transport invoices** and related policies

- All claims must be submitted with **documentary evidence** (e.g. invoices, booking confirmations, or cancellation policies) within **five working days** of the postponement.
- All claims are subject to review and must receive **formal approval from EIH** before reimbursement is authorised.
- If satisfactory evidence is **not provided**, the fixture may be **awarded against** the team that failed to supply evidence and/or **cost claims may be declined**.
- EIH will determine what constitutes **satisfactory documentation**.

9. Payment of On-Ice Officials

- **Fees:** Referees are reimbursed in accordance with **Appendix E**.
- **Default method: Cash** to the **Match Officials**, with a receipt provided on request.
- **Junior fixtures (all EIH-sanctioned competitions: league, cup, challenge, tournaments, camps, exhibitions):**
 - The **Home Team** is responsible for the **full officiating fees**. Payment must be made no later than immediately after the game and before the officials leave the venue.
 - **Default method: Cash** to the **Match Officials**, with a receipt provided on request.

Electronic payments (interim protocol)

- EIH is **reviewing electronic payment alternatives** and will issue a full policy in due course.
- Until then, **electronic payment may be used only if agreed before face-off** with the **Match Officials**. The paying team must provide on-the-spot **confirmation** (e.g., transfer reference/screenshot or card receipt).
- The Senior Referee will record the **method, time, and confirmation/reference** on the game sheet.

Non-payment

- If payment (cash or agreed electronic) is **not confirmed before face-off**, **EIH/IHUK Referee services may be suspended** for that team until all amounts are settled.
- Any fixture falling within a suspension period will be **cancelled** and recorded as a **Failure to Fulfil a Fixture**, with the **non-paying team at fault**.

10. Equipment & Kit (Junior)

Baseline: IIHF equipment rules apply, with EIH additions set out below and in **EIH Rules & Regulations – Skaters' Equipment**.

ElH junior requirements (U10–U19)

- **Full kit at all times** during games (including when serving a penalty).
- **Full-face protection (cage or full visor): mandatory for all ElH junior players (U10–U19).**
 - Must be **worn as manufactured**; no alterations.
 - **Fit:** chin sits properly in the **chin cup**; helmet secured; **J-clips** (where provided) engaged. If fit cannot be achieved, the player **must not continue** until corrected. Refer to the IHUK In-House Rules for further information.
- **Neck-laceration protector: mandatory and unaltered** from manufacturer spec.
- **Illegal equipment:** Non-compliance with full-face or neck protection will be penalised as **illegal equipment**.
- **Jerseys:** Shirt/number must match the **official team list**.

Bench standards

- **Rostered (dressed) players** on the bench: **full kit**, including **helmet (full face)** and **neck guard**.
- **Non-playing junior players** may be on the bench only if wearing, at minimum: **helmet with full-face protection, neck guard, and upper-body protection**. Otherwise, they must leave the bench.
- **U19 note:** In line with ElH junior policy, **U19 players must wear a full cage/ full face** at all times during games.

11. Mercy Rule

Applies to all divisions.

Trigger: When a team leads by **12 goals** (e.g., 12–0, 13–1).

From the moment of trigger:

- The **score is frozen** and becomes the **official result** for standings.
- **No further goals or shots on goal** are recorded on the game sheet or scoreboard.
- **Penalties** continue to be assessed, served, and **recorded**.
- The remainder of the fixture is treated as a **Challenge game**; mark “**Challenge – Mercy Rule**” on the game sheet.
- By mutual agreement, teams may **swap goalkeepers, mix players**, or continue as-is.
- The game **must continue to full time**; **match officials’ fees** are payable as normal.

12. Appendices

A – League structures & games matrix

B – Junior National Finals

C – Minimum squad & bench strength requirements

D – U12 Competition Format & Administration

E – On-ice official fees

F – Contacts

Appendix A – League structures & games matrix

League Structures

U19 Leagues	U16 Leagues	U14 Leagues	U12 Leagues
U19s National Division U19 North Division 1 U19 South Division 1 U19 North Division 2 U19 South Division 2	U16 North Division 1 U16 South Division 1 U16 North Division 2 U16 South Division 2	U14 North Division 1 U14 South Division 1 U14 North Division 2 U14 South Division 2	U12 North Division 1 U12 South Division 1 U12 North Division 2 U12 South Division 2

U19 National Division

Format

- Each team plays **one home and one away fixture** against every other team.
- The **top 8 teams** qualify for the **Quarter Finals**, seeded by league position.

Quarter Finals (23–24 May, 2 legs, home & away):

- Game A: 1st vs 8th
- Game B: 2nd vs 7th
- Game C: 3rd vs 6th
- Game D: 4th vs 5th

Semi Finals (aggregate winners):

- SF1: Winner Game A vs Winner Game D
- SF2: Winner Game B vs Winner Game C

Final:

- Winner SF1 vs Winner SF2

Scoring system:

- **Aggregate score** across 2 legs.
- If tied:
 1. 5-minute sudden-victory overtime (3v3, golden goal).
 2. If still tied: 5 penalty shots per team (IIHF rules).
 3. If still tied: sudden-death penalty shots until a winner is determined.

Player Eligibility

- Must comply with **Junior Age Eligibility** rules in section 6.
- All U19 National Division players must wear **full face cages and neck guards** for the full season, regardless of being 18+.

- Players 18 or older are **not permitted to consume alcohol**, as this remains a junior league.

Two-Way Agreements

- Clubs may use up to **2 players on two-way agreements** from clubs **not competing in the U19 National Division**.
- Players on two-way agreements may only represent **one National Division club** in a season.
- All players, including two-way players, must meet the **25% minimum league game requirement** to be playoff-eligible.

Exception: players “playing up” from a younger age group within their own club.

Age Group: U19 Leagues

Division	U19 National	U19 North 1	U19 North 2	U19 South 1	U19 South 2
Games	18	20	18	18	16
Format	1H & 1A	1H & 1A Plus 1H & 1A selected games	3 games against each team	3 games against each team	2H & 2A
Start date	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025
End date	17 th May 2026	17 th May 2026	17 th May 2026	17 th May 2026	17 th May 2026
National Finals	Playoff Semi Finalists	Winner	Winner	Winner	Winner
Teams	Chelmsford Guildford Haringey Leeds Peterborough Nottingham Sheffield Slough Swindon Telford	<u>Pool A</u> Kingston Leeds 2 Nottingham 2 Solihull <u>Pool B</u> Bradford Manchester Whitley Bay Widnes Teams in each pool plays additional 1H & 1A	Billingham Coventry Deeside Sheffield 2 Solihull 2 Sutton Widnes 2	Cardiff Haringey Invicta MK Storm Oxford Streatham Swindon 2	Bristol Invicta 2 MK Storm 2 Romford Solent

Age Group: U16 Leagues

Division	U16 North 1	U16 North 2	U16 South 1	U16 South 2
Games	16	18	20	16
Format	1H & 1A	1H & 1A	1H & 1A	1H & 1A
Start date	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025
End date	17 th May 2026	17 th May 2026	17 th May 2026	17 th May 2026
National Finals	Top 2 teams	Winner	Top 2 Teams	Winner
Clubs	Bradford Deeside Kingston Leeds 1 Manchester Nottingham 1 Sheffield 1 Solihull 1 Whitley Bay	Billingham Coventry Lancashire Leeds 2 Nottingham 2 Sheffield 2 Solihull 2 Sutton Telford Widnes	Cardiff Chelmsford Guildford Haringey 1 Invicta 1 MK Storm 1 Peterborough Romford 1 Slough Streatham Swindon 1	Bristol Cambridge Haringey 2 Invicta 2 MK Storm 2 Oxford Romford 2 Solent Swindon 2

Age Group: U14 Leagues

Division	U14 North 1	U14 N-East	U14 N-West	U14 South 1	U14 South 2
Games	18	20	20	16	20
Format	1H & 1A	2H & 2A	2H & 2A	1H & 1A	1H & 1A
Start date	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025
End date	10 th May 2026	10 th May 2026	10 th May 2026	10 th May 2026	10 th May 2026
National Final	Top 2 Teams	Winner	Winner	Top 2 Teams	Winner
Nation Final date	16/5/2026	16/5/2026	16/5/2026	16/5/2026	16/5/2026
Clubs	Bradford Deeside 1 Kingston Leeds 1 Manchester 1 Nottingham 1 Sheffield 1 Solihull 1 Whitley Widnes 1	Billingham Coventry Leeds 2 Nottingham 2 Sheffield 2 Sutton	Lancashire Deeside 2 Manchester 2 Solihull 2 Telford Widnes 2	Cardiff Chelmsford Guildford Haringey 1 Invicta 1 Peterborough 1 Slough 1 Streatham Swindon 1	Bristol Cambridge Haringey 2 Invicta 2 MK Storm Peterborough 2 Romford Oxford Slough 2 Solen Swindon 2

National Finals

Semi Final U14s Div 2 Winner North East v North West

Final U14s Div 2 Winners U14s Div 2 South v U14s North SF winner

Age Group: U12 Leagues

Division	U12 North 1	U12 North 2	U12 South 1	U12 South 2
Games	18	16	16	18
Format	1H & 1A	1H & 1A	1H & 1A	3 games each
Start date	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025
End date	10 th May 2026	10 th May 2026	10 th May 2026	10 th May 2026
National Final	Top 2	Winner	Top 2	Winner
Nation Final date	16 th May 2026	16 th May 2026	16 th May 2026	16 th May 2026
Clubs	Billingham Bradford Deeside Kingston Leeds Blue Leeds White Manchester Nottingham 1 Sheffield 1 Solihull 1	Billingham 2 Coventry Lancashire Nottingham 2 Sheffield 2 Solihull 2 Telford Whitley Bay Widnes	Cardiff Chelmsford 1 Guildford Haringey Invicta Peterborough Slough 1 Streatham Swindon	Bristol Cambridge Chelmsford 2 MK Storm Oxford Romford Solent

Age Group: U10 Leagues

Division	U10 N.East	U10 Midlands	U10 N.West	U10 Central
Start date	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025
End date	31 st May 2026	31 st May 2026	31 st May 2026	31 st May 2026
Clubs	Billingham Kingston Leeds Whitley Bay	Coventry Sheffield 2 Solihull Telford	Deeside Lancashire Manchester 1 Widnes	Braford Manchester 2 Nottingham Sheffield 1

Age Group: U10 Leagues

Division	U10 S.West	U10 S.East	U10 London	U10 S.Central
Start date	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025	6 th Sept 2025
End date	31 st May 2026	31 st May 2026	31 st May 2026	31 st May 2026
Clubs	Bristol Cardiff Oxford Slough 2 Swindon	Cambridge Chelmsford 1 Haringey 2 MK Storm Peterborough Romford 2	Chelmsford 2 Haringey 1 Invicta Peterborough 2 Romford 1 Streatham 2	Guildford Slough 1 Solent Streatham 1

Clubs with two teams are encouraged to **balance rosters** so that all players receive fair and equal opportunities.

U10 games: Each team must have at least **one Level 2 coach** in attendance.

Attendance confirmation: Clubs must confirm player numbers with the **host club by the Monday before the event.**

If numbers are low, **teams from other regions may be invited** to ensure full use of ice time.

Appendix B – National Junior Finals

General

All games are played under the **EIH Rule Book**, subject to the specific exceptions and formats below.

Attendance (mandatory)

The following teams must attend the National Junior Finals:

- **U19 National Division:** Playoff quarter-final winners
- **U19 Division 1:** Top placed team from North and South
- **U19 Division 2:** Top placed team from North and South
- **U16 Division 1:** Top 2 placed teams from North and South
- **U16 Division 2:** Top placed team from North and South
- **U14 Division 1:** Top 2 placed teams from North and South
- **U14 Division 2:** Top placed team from South, plus league winners from Northeast and Northwest
- **U12 Division 1:** Top 2 placed teams from North and South
- **U12 Division 2:** Top placed team from North and South

Sanction: Any team that fails to attend will start the **following season with a 10-point deduction**.

Format

- Games will be played at a **neutral venue** selected by EIH.
- The Finals will take place **over two weekends**.
- The **fixture schedule** will be published by EIH in advance of the event.

U12'S & U14'S JUNIOR NATIONALS					
SATURDAY 16TH MAY 2026			SUNDAY 17TH MAY 2026		
Faceoff	Age Group	Fixture	Faceoff	Age Group	Fixture
09.30	U14s Div 2 North Semi Final	NE2 v NW2	10.00	U12s Div 2 Final	N1 v S1
11.15	U12's Semi Final 1	N1 v S2	11.45	U12s Div 1 Final	Winners SF1 v SF2
13:00	U12's Semi Final 2	S1 v N2	13.30	U14s Div 1	Winners SF1 v SF2
14.45	U14's Semi Final 1	N1 v S2	15.15	U14s Div 2	Winners S1 v SF North
16.30	U14's Semi Final 2	S1 v N2			

U16-19'S JUNIOR NATIONALS					
SATURDAY 30th MAY 2026			SUNDAY 31 st May 2026		
Faceoff	Age Group	Fixture	Faceoff	Age Group	Fixture
09:30	U16's Semi Final 1	North 1 v South 2	09:00	U16's Div 2 Final	North v South
12:00	U16's Semi Final 2	South 1 v North 2	10:45	U16's Div 1 Final	SF 1 v SF 2
14:45	U19's National Semi Final 1	Winners Game A v Game D	12:45	U19's Div 1 Final	North v South
17:30	U19's National Semi Final 2	Winners Game B v Game C	15:30	U19's National Div Final	SF 1 v SF 2
			18:15	U19's Div 2 Final	North v South

Junior National Finals 2026 will be held at Ice Sheffield

1. Team Eligibility

- Teams that **borrowed players to meet minimum squad requirements at the start of the season** are **not eligible** for the National Junior Finals.
- If such a team qualifies, its place will revert to the **next highest placed eligible team**.
- This restriction does **not** apply to teams using **matchday dispensations** during the season.

2. Player Eligibility

- Only **eligible players** may appear on the official team list for any game designated a "Finals" game by EIHF.
- Criteria:**
 - Player may only play for their **primary registered club**.
 - Player must have played in at least **25% of league fixtures** for the qualifying team (excluding players playing up from a younger age group).
 - Players who transfer mid-season must still meet the **25% threshold calculated from the start of the season**, not from the transfer date.
- Sanction:** Any team icing an **ineligible player** will be **expelled** from the Finals. Results will be awarded in line with the **mercy rule** to the non-offending team(s).

3. Dispensations

EIHF may grant dispensation where the 25% requirement is not met due to:

- Injury (medical evidence may be required)
- GB/ENTP commitments (including camps)

- Cancelled fixtures (may count toward total)
- Female players required to prioritise WNIHL fixtures

Player Pool:

- In exceptional cases (e.g., last-minute illness or injury), teams may request use of the **Player Pool**.
- Age-eligible players from the **parent club** must be considered first.
- All dispensation requests must follow the **standard process** and be approved by EIHL, who retain the right to refuse.

4. Matchday Protocols & Administration

Team Lists

- Must be submitted to the **EIHL Event Team** in advance by the stated deadline.
- **U12:** A fixed line sheet must also be submitted and cannot be changed during the Finals.
- Lists/line sheets must be in the **official format**, signed, and handed in at team registration.
- If there are concerns with U12 line sheets, both head coaches will be asked to meet with the **Junior GM/Event GM** before the game.

Timings

- Teams must be **ready to enter the ice 5 minutes before** scheduled face-off.
- Warm-up: **5 minutes with pucks**, starting when both goaltenders enter the ice.
- Period breaks: **2 minutes on the bench** (except U19, where the second-period break may include an ice resurface and players may return to dressing rooms).
 - *Ice cuts are at the discretion of tournament officials; if no cut is scheduled, both teams will be advised before the second period.*

Ineligible Players

- If an ineligible player appears on the official list, the offending team will be **expelled from the Finals weekend**.

5. Tied Games

U14–U19:

- 5-minute **sudden-victory overtime (3v3)**.
- If still tied: **best-of-5 shootout**.
- If still tied: **sudden death shootout**, any eligible bench player may participate.
- Players serving penalties when the shootout begins are **not eligible** to take shots.

U12:

- 3-minute or 4-minute sudden-victory overtime (one full shift for each line).
- If tied: each team takes **5 penalties with Line 1 players**.
- If still tied: sudden death shootout using **Line 2 players**, then **Line 3** if needed.
- If still tied after 15 penalties (5 per line), repeat from Line 1.
- Each line is limited to **5 penalties maximum**, even if more players rotate on that line.

6. Discipline

- **Penalty points and suspensions** from the Finals carry over into the following season.
- All major offences will be reported to **EIH DOPS** and handled per normal procedures.
- **Inappropriate or abusive behaviour** (including damage to property) will not be tolerated:
 - May result in **ejection from the Finals** and/or **future event bans**.
 - Players causing damage will be held **liable for costs incurred**.

Appendix C – Minimum Squad & Bench Strength Requirements

Summary of Minimum Squads

League	No. of teams	Squad size by 31 August of playing season
Juniors	1	Min: 13 + 1
	2	Min: 26 + 2

All players must be fully registered and allocated in GameDay to their respective teams by 31 August 2025.

Summary or Minimum Bench Strength on Match Day

League	Players	Bench officials
Junior	Min: 13 + 1 [^] Max 20 + 2 Min U12: 15 + 1 Max U12: 21 + 2	L2 Team Coach and minimum L1 Assistant Coach. Team Manager: does not count towards bench strength, but may be on the bench.

Late Arrivals

- A game may start with a minimum of **six players** (5 skaters + 1 netminder).
- By the **start of the second period**, the team must reach the **full minimum bench strength** as defined in Section 8.
- These late-arriving players must be **dressed and on the bench, ready to participate**.
- If the required number is not met by the second period, the fixture will be classified as a **failure to fulfil**.
- [^]Unless a dispensation has been granted under Section 7.4.

Appendix D – U12 Competition Format & Administration

1. Line Setting

- Coaches must submit line sheets **no later than 30 minutes before face-off** using the official EIH template.
- **Maximum team size:** 18 skaters + 2 netminders.
 - *Exception:* If both teams agree to play with 4 lines, teams may dress 21 skaters + 2 netminders (officials must be informed before the game).

Line Allocation

- **Line 1:** Strongest players – max 5 (3 forwards, 2 defence).
- **Line 2:** Intermediate players – max 5 (forwards ranked 4–6, defence ranked 3–4).
- **Line 3:** Least experienced players – up to 7 (forwards 7+, defence 5+) rotated into play.
- **Line 4 (optional):** U10s/least experienced (only if both teams agree to 4-line hockey).
- Coaches should **record player assessments** for reference in case of disputes.
- Players must be identified by **line** using one of:
 - Numbered jerseys (e.g., Line 1: 10–19, Line 2: 20–29, etc.), OR
 - Coloured armbands (Line 1: red, Line 2: yellow, Line 3: blue, Line 4: green), OR
 - Helmet tape/skull caps, OR
 - Another agreed method approved by both teams and officials.

Line Management

- **Lines change on the buzzer every 60 seconds.**
- Line 1 always starts each period.
- Players can only play on their assigned line unless:
 - An injury requires a player from a lower line to move up, or
 - An ejection occurs, in which case a lower-line player must move up.
- Breaches:
 - First offence = minor penalty.
 - Persistent abuse = breach of Code of Conduct; may result in game forfeiture or points deduction.

2. Game Format

- Games are played with a **running clock**.
- **Game length:**
 - **3-line format** – three periods of **18 minutes** (running clock).
 - **4-line format** – three periods of **20 minutes** (running clock).
- Officials manage restarts fairly, dropping the puck quickly without giving either team an advantage.

Stoppages

- Games are played with a running clock, unless otherwise agreed by both teams prior to the game. In such cases, stoppages will occur after each goal, and for any situations at the officials' discretion (e.g. injuries).

Line Changes

- Buzzer every 60 seconds signals automatic line change.
- Puck must be left where it is.
- Deliberate movement = warning, then minor penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Offsides & Frozen Pucks

- Play does not stop.
- Officials call e.g., "Reds OUT!"; the attacking team must clear the zone before re-entering.
- Failure to retreat quickly = delay of game penalty.
- Excessive freezing by goalies may also be penalised.

Icing

- No icing calls at U12.

3. Netminders

- Netminders do not change ends between periods.
- If two netminders are dressed:
 - Teams may alternate them by line (standing ready by the net, no interference), OR
 - Alternate by shift from the bench (goalie swap on the buzzer).
- **Pulling the goalie:**
 - Replacement must come from the **lowest line available** (e.g., Line 3).
 - Higher-line replacements = bench misconduct penalty.

4. Penalties

- Penalties served by the offending player.
- **Minor penalties:**
 - In 3-line games, a minor penalty is 3 minutes.
 - In 4-line games, a minor penalty is 4 minutes.
- **Misconduct penalties:**
 - A misconduct remains 10 minutes.
- **Serving penalties:**
 - Penalties are served only on the player's line shifts.
 - **For example**, if a player is on a 3-line rotation, they miss their own shifts until the penalty time has expired.
- **5+Game penalty:** player ejected immediately, no need to serve the 5 minutes (line-up may be rebalanced with a lower-line player).
- Officials should explain penalties to players for development.
- Play does not stop; second official escorts penalised player to the box.
- Penalty ends if a goal is scored during the same shift (*exception: majors must be served fully*).
- Coincidental penalties are not applied at U12.

5. Match Official Coverage

- Standard games require two on-ice officials.
- If only one official is available, **Level 2 Team Coaches** are responsible for supervising play and supporting officiating.

Appendix E – On-Ice official fees

The following fees apply for the 2025–2026 season.

Please note: the prices listed exclude unavoidable additional charges such as parking fees, toll roads/bridges, congestion charges, or similar expenses.

League	Total Fee Without Mileage	Max Mileage	Max Mileage Fee	Total	Referee Fee	Linesman Fee	2 Man System
U19	£80.00	250	£112.50	£192.50	£34.00	£23.00	£40.00
U16	£69.00	200	£90.00	£159.00	£30.00	£19.50	£34.50
U14	£47.00	150	£67.50	£124.50	£24.00	£16.50	£28.50
U12	£43.00	150	£67.50	£111.50	£19.00	£19.00	£21.50

Appendix F - Contacts

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