

SCOTTISH HOCKEY UNION - EAST DISTRICT MEN'S OUTDOOR LEAGUE RULES – 2022/23

To maintain the integrity and fairness of the league it is essential that all rules and procedures are adhered to by clubs, players, umpires and spectators. Clubs should communicate closely with each other, particularly if there are any potential issues that might impact on a forthcoming match.

Please pay particular attention to any wording written in red as this will indicate a change or updating of the rules.

1. GENERAL

- a. The Men's East District leagues follow the Scottish Hockey Union (SHU) rules. Any deviation from those rules is detailed below. Where the SHU rules do not differ from Men's East district rules, then the SHU applies and is not repeated below.
- b. The District League is open to teams from all men's Clubs as defined in section 4.1 of the constitution of the East District Association of the Scottish Hockey Union (hereinafter called "the District") except for teams electing to participate in the National and Regional Leagues.
- c. New teams will be admitted to the bottom division other than in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Committee.
- d. The composition of the League will be decided by the Convenor in discussion with the East District Committee (hereinafter called "the Committee") and notified to Clubs.
- e. Trophies will be awarded annually to the winners of the respective divisions and will remain the property of the District.
- f. Three points will be awarded for a win, one point for a draw. Positions will be calculated on the basis of points gained. If points are equal, goal difference decides; if goal difference is equal, goals for decides. If there is still a tie and promotion or relegation is affected, the Committee will arrange a play-off between teams. Otherwise, teams will be placed equal. Any team conceding a match will forfeit the match, the score being recorded as a 0-5 defeat. **Additionally, two league points will be deducted and a fine not exceeding £50 may be imposed, unless the team conceding offers to play a friendly, in which case the additional penalties will be waived.**
- g. Generally the bottom two teams from each division will be relegated to the next division down and the top two teams from the respective division will be promoted in their places. If the number of teams in the divisions dictates otherwise the Committee may amend the numbers of teams promoted and relegated. The winner of any division will always be promoted.

2 FIXTURES

- a. All league matches will be played according to the current FIH rules of hockey or as agreed by the SHU. Match format is 4 x 17.5 minute quarters. There is a 2 minute break after quarters 1 and 3. There is a 5 minute break after quarter 2. Timings are strict and the games will recommence at the appropriate time whether teams are back on the pitch or not.
- b. Where teams have strips of similar colours, the first named team shall change. The second named team shall wear red socks or a colour clearly distinguishable from the first named team. The first named team shall wear socks of a colour clearly distinguishable from red.
- c. The format of the league will be determined by the number of teams entering and may vary from year to year. In general, where entries allow, each team will play all other teams in the same division twice, on a home and away basis. **EXCEPT that teams in the bottom league will play each other three times.**
- d. A fixture list will be provided by the Committee detailing the dates of matches, and will be posted on the East District Pitchero site. The Convenor must be informed by both teams of any amendments to the fixture list, and the original home teams must make the amendments in the Fixtures Site where possible, failing which request that the Convenor do so.

e. Matches should be scheduled to start between 12.00 noon and 4.30pm subject to the notice provisions below (rule 2(f)). It is, however, appreciated that for some clubs, matches will have to start outwith these times, and both teams should be prepared to be flexible on these occasions, as long as the away team has been notified at least 4 weeks in advance of the match and as long as the timing does not impact the ability of the away club to field a team. The home Club should confirm the time and venue with the opposition. Where a match is due to start between 12 noon and 4.30pm the opposition must be given at least five days before the fixture (i.e. notified by Monday for a Saturday match). **However, where a team consists mainly of youth players, clubs shall agree to a later start time and the League Convenor copied into all correspondence 10 days in advance to the match.**

f. Note that leaving a message or sending an email does not constitute 'confirmation'. Home teams must not assume the message has been delivered successfully. They must ask the away team to confirm receipt within two days. It is expected that away teams will attempt to contact the home team if notification of time and venue for a fixture has not been received.

g. Games must start at the agreed time and incomplete teams are obliged to start the game, (minimum of 8 players). Clubs should note that the 15 minute delay in the start of the match should only be used in emergencies or exceptional circumstances, for example overrunning of earlier matches, and NOT for late arrival of players/umpires. In the absence of emergencies or exceptional circumstance, if a team is not ready to start and on the pitch by the due start, their opposition may claim one goal for each five minute delay (i.e. five and ten minutes after due start time, up to a maximum of 2 goals). Any team not ready to start within fifteen minutes of the scheduled time will be deemed to have forfeited the match.

h. All fixtures must be completed by midnight on the penultimate Saturday preceding the District A.G.M. or they will be declared void. Any dispensation will be at the discretion of the Committee.

i. Any team conceding one quarter (or more) of its fixtures and where sanctions are applied may be invited to reapply for admission at the District A.G.M.

3. POSTPONEMENTS OR CANCELLATIONS

a. In the event of bad weather or a pitch being unplayable, the decision to postpone a fixture should be made by the Groundstaff, then the Captains, then the Umpires in that order.

c. The home Club should make every effort to inform the opposition of any postponement at least two hours before the scheduled start time. If no representative of the opposition Club is available the home Club should report this as soon as possible to the Convenor (text or email – see match report form) or, if he is unavailable, to any member of the Committee to act as witness that an attempt has been made.

d. Any failure to contact the opposition will be considered by the Committee and may result in a 0-5 defeat being recorded against the home team.

e. Any decision to abandon a match once started should be made by the Umpires.

f. The Convenor should be informed of a postponement within seven days. Postponed matches should be re-arranged as quickly as possible and the Convenor informed by the home Club of the new date and the home team must amend the fixture details in the Fixtures Site where possible, failing which ask the Convenor to do so. In the event of failure to agree a date the Committee will re-arrange the fixture after consultation with the Clubs concerned.

4. PLAYERS

a. Players taking part in league matches must be male, 14 years old or over, bona-fide members of the Club involved and must be registered with both East District and SHU by that club while complying with the Named Squads. A list of all players to be registered with East District should be submitted to the Convenor by the 30th September. All players within a club must be registered with East district irrespective of whether they play within the District or in regional or National leagues. Payment of club and player registration fees should be made by October 31st of each season.

Failure to pay the registration fees by the 31st December may result in a £150 fine being imposed by the East District Committee. If fees remain outstanding by the 28th February a further £150 fine or automatic relegation may be imposed by the East District committee. If fees remain outstanding by the 31st March the club will be deemed to have withdrawn itself from the district. The club may re-apply for membership at the AGM. Re-entry will only be possible once all outstanding fees have been paid, and entry will be into the lowest league. Clubs fielding unregistered or ineligible players will forfeit the match. Unregistered players are not eligible for selection for participation in any District Competition.

b. All Clubs with teams involved in National and/or Regional Leagues should submit the list of nine players for each of their National and Regional league teams that they have provided to the SHU, to the Convener by the 31st October (form available from East District Pitchero site – copy of the list provided to SHU is appropriate). **The nine listed players for each National or Regional league team are ineligible to play in East District matches. Clubs with more than one team in East District must also submit a 'named nine' for all but their lowest team.**

c. Players may not represent more than one Club in any one season except with the written permission of the Convenor and if transferred through the SHU system.

d. Other than via the exception for Development teams (see rule 4f), players may only play for one team on any one match day. Exceptions will be given for goalkeepers but the Convenor and opposition must be advised at the earliest opportunity. Where possible and allowing for normal Club selection policy, the players in each team in a Club should be consistent throughout the season. A player should not play for a team more than one team below his normal team.

e. **In the event of a team fielding an ineligible player a 3 points deduction will be applied. Additionally, any team found providing false information on a Match Report Form will be disciplined by the Committee and may be expelled from the League. The opposing Captain should annotate the MRF with any queries he may have regarding eligibility of players – before signing the form.**

f. **Development Teams – currently play in the lowest division – East 4. The exception to Rule 4d allows Development teams to use up to FOUR players from other teams to ensure that matches are played and the new players encouraged. Development teams cannot be promoted.**

5 RESULTS

a. All fixtures and results will be shown in the Pitchero site only. All clubs should maintain their contact information on their club website **and advise Convenors of any changes during the season.**

b. The home team should enter the result into Pitchero where possible. The result should also be emailed to the Convenor. It is important that the results are entered promptly by one or other of the teams playing.

c. The Home and Away Captains are responsible for the correct completion of the team lists on the Match Report Form before the game, which should then be handed to the umpires. The umpires are responsible for inputting the scores, cards and initialling any amendments subsequent to signing. All names on the MRF must be printed and the full correct names of the players provided. Where incorrect or illegible names are provided the offending club will be warned, with persistent offending resulting in a one point deduction for each incorrectly completed MRF.

d. Match Report Forms (MRF) will be required for all league matches except where the match has been conceded. It is the responsibility of the home team to ensure that the Form is correctly completed and returned to the Convenor. Scanned/photographed images of both sides of the MRF should be emailed to the Convenor as detailed on the MRF within 7 days of the match, with the original retained by the club. If it is not possible to scan the MRF and send it electronically, the MRF should be posted to the Convenor. All received MRF's will be acknowledged in Pitchero. If the home team does not return a correctly completed MRF or send notification in writing/email of any postponement for receipt by the Convenor within seven days of the match, the team will be deducted one point for each MRF not received. **Any comments from Captains of either team should be annotated on the form prior to signing.**

6. UMPIRES

- a. Clubs must provide an umpire for all their matches.
- b. An umpire will officiate throughout the match **unless there are exceptional circumstances and agreed by both Captains.**
- c. All umpires officiating at matches in all Divisions of the League must be qualified to at least Grade "C" / Level 1 and their names registered with the Convener of the District Umpires Committee. Use of unbadged umpires is prohibited. An exception will be granted in any game in the bottom two divisions where a prospective umpire has attended an umpire theory course and is undergoing their practical assessment. **Consent of both teams involved must be obtained 7 days prior to the match date and to subject the availability of a test panel agreed by the Umpires Committee.**
- d. A list of a Club's umpires must be provided to the Convenor by the 30th September **and updated with any new umpires throughout the season.**

7. DISCIPLINE

- a. The League is governed by the Code of Discipline as set out in Appendix 3 of the District Constitution.
- b. Details of all temporary and permanent suspensions should be recorded on the Match Report Form. If required, details of the offence may be submitted to the Convener separately within seven days of the match.
- c. In the event of a permanent suspension (red card), the umpire concerned should report the incident to the Convener within forty-eight hours of the match. In the event of a Class 2 Red card the Club is responsible for implementing the player's suspension for the next two league matches.
- d. Players are reminded of the "clean air" policy, in particular with regard to abusive language. Such behaviour is not in the spirit of the game and will be dealt with firmly by the Committee. This applies to players, coaches and spectators. Teams are responsible for the behaviour of anyone who is supporting their team and if deemed necessary umpires are entitled to stop a game and ask for the person giving the abuse to be removed. All incidents of this nature should be reported to the Convenor immediately who will take whatever action is deemed appropriate.
- e. **Clubs are reminded not to post abusive tweets or comments on Social Media about an opponent or an official. These are public forums where no abuse of the Hockey Family is acceptable.**

8. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

- a. All appeals or complaints must be in writing, separate from any Match Report Form, and should be received by the Convener within seven days of the event or they will not be considered. On receipt, should he consider it necessary, the Convener will notify any third parties of the appeal or complaint and invite comment from them for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.
- b. In all instances the decision of the Committee is final.

NOTE: Clubs should note that email correspondence is the preferred means of communication whenever possible and will be accepted for all references to 'in writing' in the rules.

Rules Revised September 2023.