



ULSTER HOCKEY

Inspire - Build - Sustain





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COMPETITIONS RULES & REGULATIONS

1. Administration of Competitions

The organisation and administration of Competitions within Ulster Hockey Ltd., hereinafter called "Ulster Hockey" or "UH", has been delegated to its Competitions Committee, hereinafter referred to as "the Committee".

2. Organisation and Structure of UHU Competitions

- (a) The Committee shall organise and manage all competitions played in each year for the various Cups and Trophies presented by Ulster Hockey (excluding Indoor, Masters, School and Under Age competitions). Unless varied in these regulations, all matches shall be played in accordance with the FIH Rules of Hockey: [Rules of Hockey | Official Documents \(fih.hockey\)](#)
- (b) There shall be a section for Men's Competitions and a section for Women's Competitions; a Fixtures Secretary shall be appointed for each.
- (c) The Committee shall be empowered to adjudicate on any matter arising which is not covered by these Rules & Regulations and shall report to the Management Board on such matters and for ratification of decisions taken.
- (d) The Committee reserves the right to amend or alter the composition of any league, the promotion and relegation rules for any league, the number of games to be played, the date any league shall be deemed as finished and the venue(s) at which games shall be played.

3. Admission to Competitions

Application for admission to all competitions must be forwarded to the Ulster Hockey Office at admin@ulsterhockey.com and the Competitions mailbox at competitions@ulsterhockey.com by email, or on the appropriate entry form provided by Ulster Hockey and received not later than the date requested by Ulster Hockey each year. A fully completed club affiliation form must be submitted no later than the date requested by Ulster Hockey each year.

Late admissions shall be at the discretion of the Committee.

Competitions: Competitions may be scheduled to be played on any day of the week, including Sundays.

Competitions shall be held each season as follows:

Competition Rules & Regulations 2024/25



- (a) Leagues shall be in sections as determined by the Committee and approved by the Management Board.
- (b) Challenge Cups, Shields, and Plate Competitions (hereinafter referred to as Cup Competitions) and such other Competitions as may be determined by the Committee and approved by the Management Board.
- (c) The Ulster Hockey League Competition shall be decided on points.
With the exception of the Men's Intermediate League, Women's Senior League 3 and Men's Junior Leagues 5(a) & 5(b), each team shall play home and away matches with every other team in the same league; unless by a decision of the Committee, one or both matches are fixed for the ground of either club or at a neutral ground. The duration of each quarter will be 17.5 minutes, unless agreed otherwise. The minimum duration for each quarter shall be 12.5 minutes. The interval between each quarter shall be no longer than 2 mins with the exception of half time that shall be no longer than 5mins. The direction of play is only reversed in the 3rd quarter.

Where a team plays in the EYHL 1 (IHL 1), that team is deemed to be the recognised senior team of that club and is therefore ineligible to participate in an UH league for senior teams; no other team from that club is eligible to participate in an UH league for senior teams. UH teams participating in EYHL 2 (IHL 2) will be eligible to play in UH leagues for senior teams.

- (d) The Committee shall decide the number of points to be awarded for a win and a draw in all league competitions in any season and the team with the highest number of points at the end of the competition shall be adjudged the winner. In the 2024/25 season, 3 points will be awarded for a win, 1 point for a draw and 0 points for a loss.
- (e) Cup Competitions and Promotion & Relegation Play-offs
Unless otherwise determined by the Committee the duration of such matches shall be 17.5 minutes each quarter. The minimum duration of each quarter shall be 12.5 minutes. The interval between each quarter shall be no longer than 2 mins with the exception of half time that shall be no longer than 5mins. If, at the end of normal time, the scores are equal, no extra time shall be played and a penalty shootout competition shall follow, as per the current FIH Rules of Hockey (see Appendix C).

Where Cup Competitions and Promotion & Relegation Play-offs are played on a league basis and a team fails to fulfil a fixture, then ALL that team's results (including any fixtures that have been played in the relevant competition), will be declared null and void. Rules 4 (a), (b) and (c) will be used to determine the finishing positions and qualification to the next stage, where appropriate. Rule 12 (vi) only applies to the first unfulfilled fixture.
(Promotion and Relegation Play-offs form part of a league competition.)

- (f) The Committee, at the commencement of each playing season shall determine the eligibility for the Plate Competitions.

- (g) No player may play in the final of a Cup Competition if they have not played in a previous round of that Cup Competition, unless permitted to do so by the Committee.

4. Ranking, Promotion and Relegation

There shall be automatic promotion and relegation between leagues except between senior and junior.

Unless otherwise determined by UH clubs before the conclusion of the 2024/25 season, any Ulster team relegated from EYHL 1 / IHL 1 will play in the Ulster Premier League in the following season and all promotion and relegation issues will be as per Rule 4 and Appendix D.

The number of teams automatically relegated and the finishing position of the sides that will play-off against the team placed second in the league below may be varied in accordance with the number of Ulster teams promoted to, or relegated from, EYHL 1.

Premier Leagues.

Teams shall be ranked according to the number of points each has accumulated.

Points (a) - (c) below will also be used to determine positions in the Premier Leagues.

- (a) If two (2) or more teams attain equal points then these teams will be ranked according to their respective goal difference (which means "goals for" less "goals against"). A positive goal difference always takes precedence over a negative one.
- (b) If two (2) or more teams still remain equal then these teams will be ranked according to their respective number of "goals for".
- (c) In the event of equality remaining then there shall be a play-off match or matches between the teams to determine the final ranking.
- (d) If a Premier League team is either disqualified or has refused/failed to play or to complete a league match, it shall be considered to have withdrawn from the league.
- (e) If a team so withdraws from the league then the result(s) of any match(es) already played by that team shall be declared null and void and removed from the records. The league points table shall be amended accordingly.

Men's Intermediate League

In the Men's Intermediate League, each team shall play each of the other teams once. At the conclusion of this round of fixtures, the league shall split into two divisions (Division A consisting of the teams placed 1-4 after the first round of fixtures; and Division B consisting

of teams placed 5-8), with each team playing each other team in that division a further three times. Points attained during the first round of fixtures (pre-split), will carry forward to the second round of fixtures.

The 1st and 2nd placed teams of Intermediate League Division A will be deemed the winners and runners-up of the Intermediate League for the purposes of promotion.

Women's Senior League 3.

In the Women's Senior League 3, each team shall play each of the other teams once. At the conclusion of this round of fixtures, the league shall split into two divisions (Division A consisting of the teams placed 1-6 after the first round of fixtures and Division B consisting of teams placed 7-11), with each team playing each other team in that division once. Points attained during the first round of fixtures (pre-split), will carry forward to the second round of fixtures.

The 1st and 2nd placed teams of Women's Senior League Division A will be deemed the winners and runners-up of the Women's Senior League 3 for the purposes of promotion.

Men's Intermediate League and Women's Senior Leagues.

Teams will be ranked on points accumulated only. Promotion to the Men's and Women's Premier League for the 2025/26 season is as described in Appendix D.

The top team on points shall be promoted to replace the team with least points in the league above. The second placed team in the league shall play a playoff match against the team placed second from bottom in the league above to determine promotion/relegation between these teams.

Junior Leagues

Teams will be ranked on points accumulated only. The top two (2) teams in each league shall replace the bottom two (2) teams in the league above. Where there is equality in points a test match or series of test matches may be played.

In junior leagues, a maximum of **two** teams from a club may appear in any one league except as determined by the Committee.

Men's Junior Leagues 5 (a) and 5(b) are considered as one league for the purpose of promotion. The winner of each section will play the runner up of the other section in a playoff match, with the winners of each playoff match promoted to the league above.

The Committee shall determine the structure of all leagues for the ensuing season to the provisions of promotion and relegation.

5. Registration of Players.

No player may play in any UH Competition unless they have been registered with UH, have met all Hockey Ireland membership requirements and been provided with a Hockey Ireland membership number.

On or before 1st October in each year, every club affiliated to Ulster Hockey, (except Queens University Club, whose due date for forwarding such particulars shall be 14th October in each year) shall forward to the Ulster Hockey Registration Secretary at registrations@ulsterhockey.com a list containing the following particulars for approval by the Committee and confirming registration with Ulster Hockey. These registrations, subject to any amendments made in accordance with Rule 5, shall remain effective until 30th September in the following year.

Registration requirements

- (a) The names (including first names, maiden name [if applicable] and dates of birth [DD/MM/YY] for identification) of all players whom the club wishes to register with Ulster Hockey as eligible for playing membership, stating, in the case of players who were not registered for that club in the previous season, the club, if any, for which they were last registered. Players are not considered eligible to play until all the above information is received in full (to include Hockey Ireland Membership number).
- (b) Registrations will be monitored by the Committee. Where breach of registration regulations is confirmed, appropriate sanction will be imposed.
- (c) A player may not play until 72 hours after confirmation of registration with UH.

The system shall operate as follows:

- (i) From the general list submitted, all club teams, except for the bottom team, will have eleven (11) registered players in descending order of merit using the principles described below;
- (ii) A club with two teams shall star the first eleven (11) players normally chosen for the 1st XI;
- (iii) Additionally, a club with three teams shall star for its 2nd XI, eleven (11) players normally selected for its 2nd XI, and so on;
- (iv) This rule shall pertain to all players including those who normally play as a goalkeeper;
- (v) In order to be allowed to play for a club in Ulster Hockey competitions every bona fide member of a club wishing to play in an Ulster Hockey competition must have played for their club by (and including) 15th January in the current season and have been registered to the club with UH, or have played for their club in the preceding season, provided they have not played competitive hockey* elsewhere in the intervening period. The time limit shall not apply to those attaining their 15th birthday after 15th January;

**Competitive Hockey definition:*

- Any competitive hockey league (sanctioned or un-sanctioned), run by a National Association anywhere in the world or any regional administration below the NA.
- Closed university only competitions, whether social or competitive, are excluded from the definition of Competitive Hockey and players playing in such competitions, can continue to be registered to their club and play in HI & UH competition, providing they fulfil other eligibility criteria

- (vi) Any new member to a club (excluding those transferring from another club) wishing to play in an Ulster Hockey competition must have played for the club by (and including) 15th January in the current season.
- (vii) In the event of an exceptional circumstance clubs must write to the Competitions Committee for consideration to be given to an exemption. Exemptions will only be considered in cases such as genuine error by Ulster Hockey leading to a delayed registration or in the case of injury preventing play, with satisfactory medical evidence being furnished to support the exemption request.
- (viii) **A player may not be registered to play in competitions organized by more than one National Association.**

An athlete whose Home National Association is Hockey Ireland who wishes to participate in an event organised or sanctioned by another National Association must obtain a No-Objection Certificate from Hockey Ireland / be transferred to a club under the jurisdiction of another National Association.

An athlete whose National Association is not Hockey Ireland or who has been playing hockey in another National Association event who wishes to participate in one or more events organised or sanctioned by Hockey Ireland, and who is not included by name or by category in a notice issued by Hockey Ireland pursuant to its rules and regulations must submit a written application for a No-Objection Certificate from either the National Association whose event the athlete has been taking part in or from the athlete's former club.

Please refer to the Hockey Ireland website www.hockey.ie for more information regarding this rule and format.

Transfers

- (i) Any new member to a club wishing to play in any UH competition must be registered and have played by 15th January in the current season, unless permitted to do so by the Committee, in accordance with Rule 5(c).
- (ii) A player may transfer to another club up to 15th January of each season subject to clearance from the player's previous club. Any player that transfers to a new club may not play for their new club in any UH Cup Competition (including subsequent Plate competitions) that has commenced* at the date of transfer and must fulfil Rules 5a (v) and 5a (vi);

(* A Cup Competition is deemed to have commenced at the start of the first match played by any teams in that Cup Competition, whether or not that match has been completed.)

- (iii) Transfers must be approved by the Committee. Once approved, the transfer of the player's HI Membership Number should also be completed on GameDay.
 - (iv) The transferring player must not play for their new club until UH issues email confirmation of the transfer to the new club.
 - (v) Where approval is given, clubs must advise Ulster Hockey registrations@ulsterhockey.com of their revised registrations in respect of the transferred player.
 - (vi) A player's registration will be null and void if they have not played for the club they are registered for within the preceding two years.
- (d) Cup Competitions

No player shall be allowed to play for two different teams in the same Cup Competition in the same season. Any Plate Competition that is subsequent to a Cup Competition is deemed to be the same Cup Competition for the purpose of this rule and for the purposes of registrations and transfers.

6. Alteration to Registrations (excluding Transfers)

- (a) A club may alter registration by promoting to a higher team up to a maximum of two (2) players in each of the lists of eleven (11) players registered under the above regulations by advising the appropriate Ulster Hockey registration secretary at registrations@ulsterhockey.com of the names on or before the first Monday in each month. Such alterations shall apply to matches played subsequent to the first Monday of each month.
- (b) Where a player has/will miss 5 consecutive matches through absence or injury, the club shall remove the player from the team registration list and place the player on the general list. When said player returns to play, they shall be re-registered as per existing registration regulations. Failure to do so will result in appropriate sanction being imposed.
- (c) No alteration to the above lists shall be permitted for Cup Competitions (or subsequent Plate competitions), after the first round of any Cup Competition has taken place. (Alterations shall apply to league competitions only).

- (d) Notwithstanding the above, no alterations shall be made after the first Monday in March in any season or at another date designated by the Committee and approved by the Management Board.
- (e) A player cannot be re-registered whilst suspended from participating in hockey.
- (f) The Committee shall have the power to cancel or vary the registration of any player at any time should they consider the circumstances justify such action. The club shall be advised of any change by the first Thursday in the month.

7. Grounds

- (a) All grounds shall be approved by the Grounds Inspection Committee appointed by the Chief Executive of UH;
- (b) Each club must register its home ground(s);
- (c) Each club playing in the Premier and Senior / Intermediate Leagues must register and play on a synthetic pitch as its home pitch. Junior teams may play on a synthetic pitch or an approved all-weather pitch;
- (d) Each club must ensure that changing and toilet facilities are available.

8. Match Times

Except by agreement of the Committee the scheduled agreed start time of matches will fall within the following time slots:

- (i) Saturdays - not earlier than 12.30pm and not later than 4.00 pm, except in the case of Premier League not later than 5.00 pm, unless by mutual agreement.
- (ii) Midweek and Friday evening - not earlier than 7.00 pm and not later than 8.30 pm, unless by mutual agreement.
- (iii) Sunday Afternoon - not earlier than 1.00 pm and not later than 5.00 pm, unless by mutual agreement.
- (iv) If a team is not ready to take the field at the nominated time, the umpires may permit a 10 minute delay. The quarters may be shortened to compensate for the delayed start.

9. Fixtures

- (a) All fixtures shall be determined by the Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary (M) or (W) as appropriate. Failure to complete a fixture by the due date shall result in a review by the Committee. A team deemed to have failed to fulfil a fixture by that date shall be deemed to have forfeited the fixture and Rule 12 (iv) will apply.
- (b) The home club must NOTIFY and then RECEIVE confirmation from the opposing Match Secretary of fixture, venue and starting time no later than the Monday prior to the game. Any club (home or away) that does comply may be subject to sanction as determined by the Committee. In cases where the home club has not notified the opposing Match Secretary, or the opposing Match Secretary has not confirmed the fixture, by the Monday prior to the fixture, the Committee may impose such sanction as it, in its absolute discretion, deems appropriate.
- (c) Matches may be played on Friday evening providing that the opposition team have been given a minimum of fourteen (14) days' notice for all matches and the opposition team does not have to travel more than 1hr to fulfil the fixture (travel time is at the discretion of the Competitions Committee). See Appendix B for guidance on the scheduling of Cup Competition fixtures on Friday evenings. Where a fixture is originally scheduled for a Friday evening, any subsequent change to play on a Saturday, is also subject to a minimum fourteen (14) days' notice, unless by mutual agreement and confirmed by the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary.
- (d) By mutual agreement between clubs, a fixture may be brought forward provided six (6) days' notice is given to the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and relevant Umpires' Appointments Secretary.
- (e) Any changes to the original scheduling of a fixture must be advised to and approved by the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and advised to the relevant Umpires' Appointment Secretary (where appropriate).
- (f) The Committee may schedule matches to be played on a Sunday. In addition matches may be played (by mutual agreement) on a Sunday afternoon either prior to the originally arranged date or the same weekend.

10. Postponement

- (a) When a home club deems their playing surface to be unfit - due to adverse weather conditions - it is the responsibility of that home club to make VERBAL contact (which may be followed up with a text message) with the travelling club and relevant Umpires' Appointments Secretary to cancel the match. (Text messages alone are not deemed

sufficient notice to advise of a cancellation.) Such contact must be made allowing sufficient time to prevent an away team and Umpires travelling.

- (b) It is a home club's responsibility to notify Umpires and the appropriate Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary.
- (c) If, on arrival at the ground by both teams and Umpires, doubt is cast on whether the match should commence, either because of a sudden change in climatic conditions or other adverse circumstances, before the scheduled start time then.
 - (i) A Technical Official appointed by Ulster Hockey shall determine the suitability of the pitch prior to the starting time.
 - (ii) Ulster Hockey appointed Umpires shall determine the suitability of the pitch prior to the starting time.
 - (iii) Both Captains shall determine the suitability of the pitch prior to the starting time.
 - (iv) If both Captains agree not to play, the game shall not proceed;
 - (v) If the Captains disagree on whether or not to play, the game should not proceed.
- (d) An email report confirming such circumstances must be forwarded to the matchcards@ulsterhockey.com mailbox within 24 hours of the decision to postpone the match.
- (e) Where two teams from a club play in the same league and a match between the two teams is postponed for any reason, the match must be **rearranged and played within 14 days** of the date originally scheduled by the UH Fixtures Secretary. Any such fixture not rearranged and played within 14 days, will be subject to review by the Committee and the Committee may apply such sanction as it, in its absolute discretion, deems appropriate, including declaring the match void, with no points awarded to either team.
- (f) A club wishing to postpone a match due to special circumstances other than the above must seek approval from the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary. All requests, including reasons for the request, must be sent to the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and the Competitions mailbox at competitions@ulsterhockey.com. See Appendix B for guidelines relating to requests for a postponement due to special circumstances.

11. Abandoned match

A game, once started, is under the control of the Umpires. Should pitch or weather conditions, or any other reason render the game to be unplayable, it shall be abandoned. This must be reported with the match card by the home club. In addition both clubs must

inform the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and the Competitions mailbox at competitions@ulsterhockey.com within 24 hours. The Committee shall determine whether the match shall be replayed in full or in part or if the score at the time of abandonment shall stand. Any red/yellow cards issued during an abandoned fixture must be reported and will stand.

If the abandoned fixture is between two teams from the same club and the Committee determines that the match must be replayed, in full or in part, the replay must be completed within 14 days of the club being notified of the determination of the Committee, as per Rule 10 (e).

12. Failure to fulfil a fixture

Any club unable to fulfil a fixture must:

- 1) Notify their opponents as soon as possible and no later than four (4) hours prior to the arranged starting time;
- 2) Notify the appropriate Umpires' Appointments Secretary where panel umpires have been appointed.
- 3) Notify the appropriate Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary by email to matchcards@ulsterhockey.com , providing details, within 24 hours of the scheduled match time.
- 4) A team failing to fulfil a fixture shall forfeit the match and be deducted a point. For each successive match forfeited, the points deducted will be two.
- 5) Match points shall be awarded to the opponent;
- 6) A team failing to fulfil a fixture shall play its next scheduled home league match against this opponent on the opponent's home ground. This ruling is not limited to the season involved in the non-fulfilment and does not include failure to fulfil fixtures in knock-out Cup Competitions.
- 7) A team failing to fulfil two successive fixtures against the same opposition (including any fixtures reversed as per Rule 12 (vi) above), may be subject to a fine of up to £500 and/or disqualified from the league.
- 8) Failure by a team to fulfil five (5) league fixtures will result in the team being disqualified from its league. All previous results for that team will be declared null and void; Rule 4 (d) is specific to the Premier League in regard to this Rule.
- 9) Clubs that decide to concede a league or cup fixture other than for adverse climatic conditions must start with its lowest team in the club and cancel upwards in succession should there be more than one fixture involved. Failure to do so will result in any points

gained being deducted and the further deduction of one (1) point. In the case of a Cup Competition, the relevant team(s) will forfeit their place in the respective Cup Competition. This shall apply to the team that has conceded and all lower teams within that club over the same weekend.

- 10) A team refusing/failing to play or to complete a match shall be considered as withdrawing from a knockout cup competition.
- 11) A fine of up to £500 and/or a period of suspension shall be imposed on the clubs withdrawing from a cup competition.
- 12) All breaches of this Rule will be considered by the Committee on their individual merits.

13. Team Colours

- (a) Each club registered to play in Ulster Hockey competitions is required to register its club colours. Clubs are required to play in these colours except when playing away from home and their colours clash with the opposition. In that case the travelling team shall change its colour.
- (b) Colours advised to Ulster Hockey are the registered club colours and refer to tops, shorts/skirts/skorts and socks. Any change of colours during the season must be agreed by the Committee and notified by the Club Secretary to all other clubs and the Umpires' Committee before the change is used.
- (c) A team may opt to wear either skirts/skorts or shorts, but all players must adopt the same style. Where undergarments are worn, they must all be of the same colour.
- (d) All players in Premier and Senior 1 leagues must play in numbered tops which correspond to the match card.
- (e) Kit Sponsorship and Logos shall be allowed as per current Ulster Hockey, Hockey Ireland & FIH Regulations.

14. Age Eligibility

To play Adult hockey a player must have passed their 15th birthday and be registered as per Rule 5.

Any club failing to adhere to this Rule, will be sanctioned, as determined by the Committee and approved by the Management Board.

15. Umpires

(Note: This rule should be read in conjunction with Article 6 of the Constitution of the Ulster Hockey Union or the relevant section of any document/bye-laws that supersedes the Constitution.)

Games MUST be played under one of the following conditions and must not be cancelled due to lack of umpires otherwise sanctions will be applied at the discretion of the Committee.

Games shall be umpired by -

- (a) Two Panel Umpires appointed by the Umpires Committee; where only one (1) Panel Umpire is available, it is the responsibility of the home club to provide an umpire; failing that
- (b) Two umpires, one appointed by each club involved; failing that
- (c) Two umpires agreed by the team captains; failing that
- (d) Teams must each appoint an umpire from within its squad.

If one team is able to appoint an umpire but the other is not, then that team must appoint an umpire from within its squad and the team shall play with one player less if necessary.

The match MUST be played under one of the above conditions and may not be cancelled due to lack of umpires.

When umpires are in place, they shall act with the full authority of Ulster Hockey.

Should an appointed Panel Umpire arrive after play has commenced the umpires already in charge may consent to being replaced but the match shall not, in any case, restart.

16. Match Cards

Match cards will be examined by the Committee and any breaches of registrations shall be subject to sanction(s) as determined by the Committee.

- (a) Prior to the game, an Ulster Hockey match card must be filled in by both captains and handed to the umpires.
 - (i) Only those players listed at the start of the game may play;
 - (ii) Umpires must record on the match card the final score; details of any yellow / red cards awarded during the game and return to the home team captain;
 - (iii) Both team captains and both umpires must sign the match card at the end of the game to
 - (iv) Confirm it is an accurate record of the game;

- (v) The home club is responsible for ensuring a scanned copy or image of the fully completed match card is returned electronically to matchcards@ulsterhockey.com within five (5) days of the completion of the match;
- (vi) The home club match secretaries must update the relevant UH Fixtures Secretary within twenty-four (24) hours of the match being played. Premier League results must also be updated within two (2) hours following the conclusion of the match by text/SMS message (to the details provided by the UH Fixtures Secretary). Breaches of this Rule will be subject to sanction;
- (vii) The home club Match Secretary should retain all signed hard copy match cards for the duration of the season, or until such times as Ulster Hockey requests a match card.

(b) Match Cards relating to all Hockey Ireland competitions in which UH clubs compete must be returned electronically to matchcards@ulsterhockey.com within five (5) days of the completion of the match.

(c) Team Bench

A maximum of 18 players may be used by each team in each match (of whom 2 must be nominated on the matchcard as GKs and be wearing full goalkeeping equipment). If a team chooses not to include a second goalkeeper on the bench, then they are limited to 16 players.

Apart from the team manager; team coach; team physiotherapist; team medical doctor; a maximum of 18 players who are named on the match card may be on the bench. Any team doctor must be fully qualified.

(d) Ineligible player

A player shall be deemed ineligible if (i) they are not registered to play for the club (ii) registrations prevent them from playing in that team within the club.

- (i) Should either captain wish to challenge the eligibility of a player, such a challenge must be forwarded, in writing, by the club secretary to the relevant Ulster Hockey Registrations Secretary (registrations@ulsterhockey.com) and the Competitions mailbox at competitions@ulsterhockey.com, within seven (7) days of the match, accompanied by a £150 fee.

(For a challenge to be valid, the fee, along with a copy of the challenge sent to the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and the competitions mailbox, must be received at the Ulster Hockey Office, within seven (7) days of the match.) In any event the match must be played.

- (ii) The Committee shall determine the outcome of the challenge. Where the challenge is upheld, in the case of a League match, the points shall be awarded to the club that lodged the challenge. In a Cup Competition the offending team shall forfeit its place in that Cup Competition.

- (iii) The Committee may determine any additional sanction.
- (iv) The fee will be refunded in a proven case.
- (v) Challenges will only be considered if submitted in accordance with Rule 16 (d) (i). Under no circumstances will challenges be considered if submitted under the UH complaints procedure as detailed on the UH website, or through any other means.

17. Trophies

All Ulster Hockey trophies are to be returned by the notified date, engraved and cleaned. Failure to return by the due date and in the prescribed condition will result in the club being fined.

Unless trophy winners can assure Ulster Hockey that they have suitable storage facilities and adequate insurance, the trophy must be returned to the Ulster Hockey office within 14 days of presentation.

18. Protests

- (i) All protests involving matches postponed and abandoned should be sent to the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and the Competitions mailbox at competitions@ulsterhockey.com, by the Secretary of the club making the protest within seven (7) days of the scheduled fixture date, accompanied by a fee of £150. (For a protest to be valid, the fee, along with a copy of the protest sent to the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and the Competitions mailbox, must be received at the Ulster Hockey Office, within seven (7) days of the scheduled fixture date.)
- (ii) The Committee may gather information from the clubs involved, umpires or third parties.
- (iii) The Committee decision will be communicated to the relevant parties involved.
- (iv) The fee will be refunded in a proven case.
- (v) Protests will only be considered if submitted in accordance with Rule 18 (i). Under no circumstances will protests be considered if submitted under the UH complaints procedure as detailed on the UH website, or through any other means.

19. Fines and Penalties

Fines & Penalties will be applied for the current season as per Appendix A - The list in Appendix A is not exhaustive and the Committee reserves the right to impose penalties

on clubs for breaches of Rules and Regulations not detailed in Appendix A. Clubs repeatedly offending will receive increased fines and / or sanctions.

Appendix A - Fines

1	Rule 3	Failure to return Entry Forms and/or Affiliation Form by date advised by Ulster Hockey	£100
2	Rule 5	Delay return of Player Registration Forms 1 st October, except QUB 14 th October	£100
3	Rule 5	Breach of Player Registration (per player per match)	£50
4	Rule 14	Underage Player	Will be severely sanctioned as determined by the Committee and approved by the Management Board
5	Rule 12	Failure to fulfil fixture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drop points as per Rule 12 (iv) and win (if applicable) to opposition. For second failure to fulfil against the same opposition, disqualification from League and/or a fine of up to £500. For Cup Competitions, forfeit of place in that Cup Competition and/or fine of up to £500. - Next League/Cup match against this opponent will be played on the opponent's home ground. - This does not apply to the knockout stages of Cup Competitions.
6	Rule 16	Failure to return appropriate fully completed Match Card	£20 per Card
7	Rule 16	Failure to return original Match Card when requested by UH	£20 per Card & drop 1 point and win (if applicable) awarded to the opposition.
8	Rule 16	Failure to advise UH Fixtures Secretary of result within specified timescale.	£10 per Match
9	Rule 17	Failure to return Trophy by due date	£100
		Failure to return Trophy in prescribed manner	£100

1. Failure to pay any fine on time will result in an increase in the fine.
2. Clubs repeatedly offending will received increased fines and/or sanctions.
3. This list is not exhaustive

Appendix B

Guidance Notes

Rule 9 (c) Fixtures

There will be occasion when, due to the scheduling of fixtures in Cup Competitions or in exceptional circumstances, League fixtures, it is not possible for the home club to provide the required period of 14 days' notice of a proposed Friday evening fixture.

In these circumstances only, it will be deemed acceptable for a period of 5 days' notice to be given, i.e. where a home team wishes to schedule a fixture to be played on a Friday then the opposing club must be notified by no later than the preceding Monday.

Rule 10 Postponement

Clubs wishing to request a postponement of a fixture due to circumstances other than those listed must seek approval from the Committee as follows:

(i) Provincial/International Hockey:-

Where a club requests a postponement of a fixture due to personnel participating in a Provincial or International Hockey tournament, any such request must be made in writing to the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary providing detail of the persons involved, their role within the relevant Provincial or National squad, e.g. coach, manager, player etc. and their current club registration within Ulster Hockey. The request should be made as soon as possible following the confirmation of the squad but in any case no later than seven (7) days before the scheduled date of the fixture for which a postponement is requested.

Each request will be considered on its individual merits and as a guideline, the minimum criteria will be 2 persons selected.

(ii) Other Reasons:- Where a club wishes to postpone a fixture for any reason other than those covered in 10 (a) - (c), primarily for non-hockey related reasons, the club should in the first instance make contact with their opponents with a view to rescheduling the fixture to a date that is

- mutually acceptable to both teams AND
- prior to the original scheduled date of the fixture

The relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and Umpires' Appointments Secretary must be advised of any agreed change to the original fixture.

Where it is not possible for a mutually acceptable date to be agreed, the club requesting the postponement must seek approval, giving reasons to the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and to the Competitions mailbox at competitions@ulsterhockey.com.

Again, each request will be considered on its individual merits

(v) Unforeseen Circumstances

Where a club wishes to postpone a fixture due to circumstances arising which could not have been foreseen, the Club Secretary must contact the relevant Ulster Hockey Fixtures Secretary and the Competitions mailbox at competitions@ulsterhockey.com providing details of the circumstances leading to the request.

Each request will be considered on its individual merits

Appendix C

Penalty Shoot Out

Rules for Shootout Competition - Reference UH Rule 3 (e)

(Taken from Hockey Ireland Cup Competition Rules & Regulations 2017/18 - any sequential errors also appear in this document.)

A shootout competition is used to determine the winning team for drawn matches. The following, from Appendix 11 of the FIH Tournament Regulations, is provided here for ease of access and for clarification of roles.

For cup matches where there is no Technical Official appointed, all reference to the Technical Delegate shall be replaced by the umpires. [Items 3, 4, 5]

Where there is no Technical Official appointed, the home club must provide an appropriate person to act as timekeeper in support of and under the supervision of the umpires. The away club may provide an appropriate person to monitor the time keeping. [Items 4, 13e]

SHOOT-OUT COMPETITION

In a shoot-out competition, five players from each team take a one-on-one shoot-out alternately against a defender from the other team as set out in this Regulation. The shoot-out competition comprises all series of shoot-outs required to determine a result.

The following sets out both the playing Rules and the procedures to be followed.

1. If the shoot-out competition takes place after the end of a match, the first shoot-out should take place within four (4) minutes of the end of regulation playing time.
2. The respective Team Managers provide five players to take and one player to defend the shoot-outs from those on the Match Report except as excluded below. A player nominated to defend the shoot-outs can also be nominated to take a shoot-out. No substitutions / replacements are permitted during the shoot-out competition other than as specified below.
3. A player who is still serving a disciplinary suspension by the Technical Delegate at the time the shoot-out competition takes place or has been excluded permanently (red card) during the match which leads to the shoot-out competition, cannot take part in that shoot-out competition. A player who has been warned (green card) or temporarily suspended (yellow card) may take part in the shout-out competition even if the period of their suspension has not been completed at the end of the match.
4. The Technical Delegate will specify the method of timing shoot-outs taking account of the facilities available and the need to control time accurately.
5. The Technical Delegate will specify the goal to be used.
6. A coin is tossed; the team which wins the toss has the choice to take or defend the first shoot-out.

7. All persons listed on the Match Report other than any player who has been excluded permanently (red card) during the match which leads to the shoot-out competition are permitted to enter the field of play outside the 23m area used for the shoot-out but must be at least 10 metres from the spot where the ball is placed at the start of the shoot-out.

8. The goalkeeper / defending player of the team taking a shoot-out shall wait on the back-line outside the circle.

9. A player taking or defending a shoot-out may enter the 23m area for that purpose.

10. Players taking a shoot-out and also defending the shoot-outs taken by opponents are allowed reasonable time to take off their protective equipment to take their shoot-out and subsequently to put back on their protective equipment.

11. Five players from each team take a shoot-out alternately against the goalkeeper / defending player of the other team making a total of 10 shoot-outs.

13. Taking a shoot-out:

a the goalkeeper / defending player starts on or behind the goal-line between the goal posts;

b the ball is placed on the nearest 23m line opposite the centre of the goal;

c an attacker stands outside the 23m area near the ball;

d the Umpire blows the whistle to start time;

e an official at the technical table starts the clock;

f the attacker and the goalkeeper / defending player may then move in any direction;

g the shoot-out is completed when:

i 8 seconds has elapsed since the starting signal;

ii a goal is scored;

iii the attacker commits an offence;

iv the goalkeeper / defending player commits an unintentional offence inside or outside the circle in which case the shoot-out is re-taken by the same player against the same goalkeeper/defending player;

v the goalkeeper / defending player commits an intentional offence inside or outside the circle, in which case a penalty stroke is awarded and taken;

vi the ball goes out of play over the back-line or side-line; this includes the goalkeeper / defending player intentionally playing the ball over the back-line.

14 If a penalty stroke is awarded as specified above, it can be taken and defended by any eligible player on the Match Report subject to the provisions of Articles 17, 18 and 19 of this Appendix.

15 The team scoring the most goals (or ahead by more goals than the other team has untaken shoot-outs available) is the winner.

16 A player may be suspended by a yellow or red card but not by a green card during the shoot-out competition.

17 If during a shoot-out competition (including during any penalty stroke which is awarded) a player is suspended by a yellow or red card:

a that player takes no further part in that shoot-out competition and, unless a goalkeeper / defending player, cannot be replaced;

b the replacement for a suspended goalkeeper / defending player can only come from the five players of that team nominated to take part in the shoot-out competition:

i the replacement goalkeeper / defending player is allowed reasonable time to put on protective equipment similar to that which the goalkeeper/defending player they are replacing was wearing;

ii for taking their own shoot-out, this player is allowed reasonable time to take off their protective equipment to take their shoot-out and subsequently to put it on again.

c any shoot-out due to be taken by a suspended player is forfeited; any goals scored by this player before being suspended count as a goal.

18 If during a shoot-out competition, a defending goalkeeper / defending player is incapacitated:

a that goalkeeper / defending player may be replaced by another player from among the players listed on the Match Report for that particular match, except as excluded in this Appendix or unless suspended by an Umpire during the shoot-out competition;

b the replacement goalkeeper:

i is allowed reasonable time to put on protective equipment similar to that which the incapacitated goalkeeper / defending player was wearing;

ii if this replacement is also nominated to take a shoot-out, this player is allowed reasonable time to take off their protective equipment to take their shoot-out and subsequently to put it on again.

19 If during a shoot-out competition, an attacker is incapacitated, that attacker may be replaced by another player from among the players listed on the Match Report for that particular match, except as excluded above or unless suspended by an Umpire during the shoot-out competition.

20 If an equal number of goals are scored after each team has taken five shoot-outs:

a a second series of five shoot-outs is taken with the same players, subject to the conditions specified in this Appendix;

b the sequence in which the attackers take the shoot-outs need not be the same as in the first series;

c the team whose player took the first shoot-out in a series defends the first shoot-out of the next series;

d when one team has scored or been awarded one more goal than the opposing team after each team has taken the same number of shoot-outs, not necessarily being all five shoot-outs, that team is the winner.

21 If an equal number of goals are scored after a second series of five shoot-outs, additional series of shoot-outs are taken with the same players subject to the conditions specified in this Appendix:

a the sequence in which the attackers take the shoot-outs need not be the same in any subsequent series;

b the team which starts each shoot-out series alternates for each series.

22 Unless varied by this Appendix, the Rules of Hockey apply during a shoot-out.

Appendix D

Men's Premier League /Intermediate League Promotion & Relegation Processes. Women's Premier League /Senior League 1 Promotion & Relegation Processes

Scenario 1

2 Ulster Teams are relegated from EYHL 1 / IHL 1 to Ulster Premier League and no Ulster Team gains promotion to EYHL 1 / IHL 1 - 12 Teams

- Teams which finish in **8th, 9th & 10th** place in Ulster Premier League in Season 2024/2025 are **relegated** to Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2025/2026.
- **Winners** of Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2024/2025 are **promoted** to Premier League in Season 2025/2026.
- Team which finishes in 7th place in Ulster Premier League in Season 2024/2025 plays-off with Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 Runners Up in Season 2024/2025 - winners play in Premier League in Season 2025/2026 and losers play in Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2025/2026.

Scenario 2

2 Ulster Teams are relegated from EYHL 1 / IHL 1 to Ulster Premier League and 1 Ulster Team gains promotion to EYHL 1 / IHL 1

OR

1 Ulster Team is relegated from EYHL 1 / IHL 1 to Ulster Premier League and no Ulster Team gains promotion to EYHL 1 / IHL 1 - 11 Teams

- Teams which finish in **9th & 10th** place in Ulster Premier League in Season 2024/2025 are **relegated** to Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2025/2026.
- **Winners** of Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2024/2025 are **promoted** to Premier League in Season 2025/2026.
- Team which finishes in **8th** place in Ulster Premier League in Season 2024/2025 plays-off with Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 Runners Up in Season 2024/2025 - winners play in Premier League in Season 2025/2026 and losers play in Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2025/2026.

Scenario 3

2 Ulster Teams are relegated from EYHL 1 / IHL 1 to Ulster Premier League and 2 Ulster Teams gain promotion to EYHL 1 / IHL 1

OR

1 Ulster Team is relegated from EYHL 1 / IHL 1 to Ulster Premier League and 1 Ulster Team gains promotion to EYHL 1 / IHL 1

OR

No Ulster Team is relegated from EYHL 1 / IHL 1 and no Ulster Team gains promotion to EYHL 1 / IHL 1 - 10 Teams

- Teams which finish in **10th** place in Ulster Premier League in Season 2024/2025 are **relegated** to Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2025/2026.

- **Winners** of Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2024/2025 are **promoted** to Premier League in Season 2025/2026.
- Team which finishes in **9th** place in Ulster Premier League in Season 2024/2025 plays-off with Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 Runners Up in Season 2024/2025 - winners play in Premier League in Season 2025/2026 and losers play in Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2025/2026.

Scenario 4

1 Ulster Team is relegated from EYHL 1 / IHL 1 to Ulster Premier League and 2 Ulster Teams gain promotion to EYHL 1 / IHL 1

OR

No Ulster Team is relegated from EYHL 1 / IHL 1 to Ulster Premier League and 1 Ulster Team gains promotion to EYHL 1 / IHL 1 - 9 Teams

- **Winners** of Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2024/2025 are **promoted** to Premier League in Season 2025/2026.
- Team which finishes in **10th** place in Ulster Premier League in Season 2024/2025 plays-off with Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 Runners Up in Season 2024/2025 - winners play in Premier League in Season 2025/2026 and losers play in Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2025/2026.

Scenario 5

No Ulster Team is relegated from EYHL to Ulster Premier League and 2 Ulster Teams gain promotion to EYHL - 8 Teams

- **Winners and runners-up** of Men's Intermediate League / Women's Senior League 1 in Season 2024/2025 are **promoted** to Premier League in Season 2025/2026.

Appendix E

Proposal regarding restructure of UH Men's Leagues for Season 2025/26

- (1) The UH Men's Premier League will remain as a league consisting of 10 teams.
- (2) The Men's Intermediate League will cease to exist.
- (3) The Men's Junior Leagues will be renamed, with Junior League 1 becoming UH Men's Division 1; Junior League 2 becoming UH Men's Division 2 etc.
- (4) The 1st XI of a club can play in the Men's Premier League or any Men's Division as determined by promotion and relegation, initially as detailed below and subject to Appendix D:
 - The team that wins Men's Intermediate League in season 2024/25 is promoted to Men's Premier League for season 2025/26.
 - The team that finishes in 10th place in Premier League in Season 2024/2025 is relegated to Men's Division 1 for season 2025/26.
 - The team that finishes in 9th place in Premier League in Season 2024/2025, plays off against the team that finishes in second place in Men's Intermediate League. The winner of this play off match plays in Premier League in season 2025/26. The side that loses this play off match plays in Division 1 in season 2025/26.
 - The teams that finish in 3rd and 4th places in the Intermediate League in season 2024/25 will play in Division 2 in season 2025/26.
 - The teams that finish in 5th and 6th places in the Intermediate League in season 2024/25 will play in Division 3 in season 2025/26.
 - The teams that finish in 7th and 8th places in the Intermediate League in season 2024/25 will play in Division 4 in season 2025/26.
- (5) In season 2025/26 and subsequent seasons, the highest ranked 1st XI team in Division 1 or 2, shall be promoted to replace the 10th placed team in the Premier League. The 10th placed team in the Premier League will take the place of the promoted team in the Division that team has been promoted from (i.e. Division 1 or 2).

The second highest placed 1st XI in Division 1 or 2 shall play off against the side that finished 9th in the Premier League. The winner of this play off match will play in the Premier League in the following season.

Should there be no 1st XI teams in Division 1 or 2, i.e. the highest placed 1st XI played in Division 3, then that team shall play off against the 10th placed team in Premier League. The winner of this play off match will play in the Premier League in the following season.

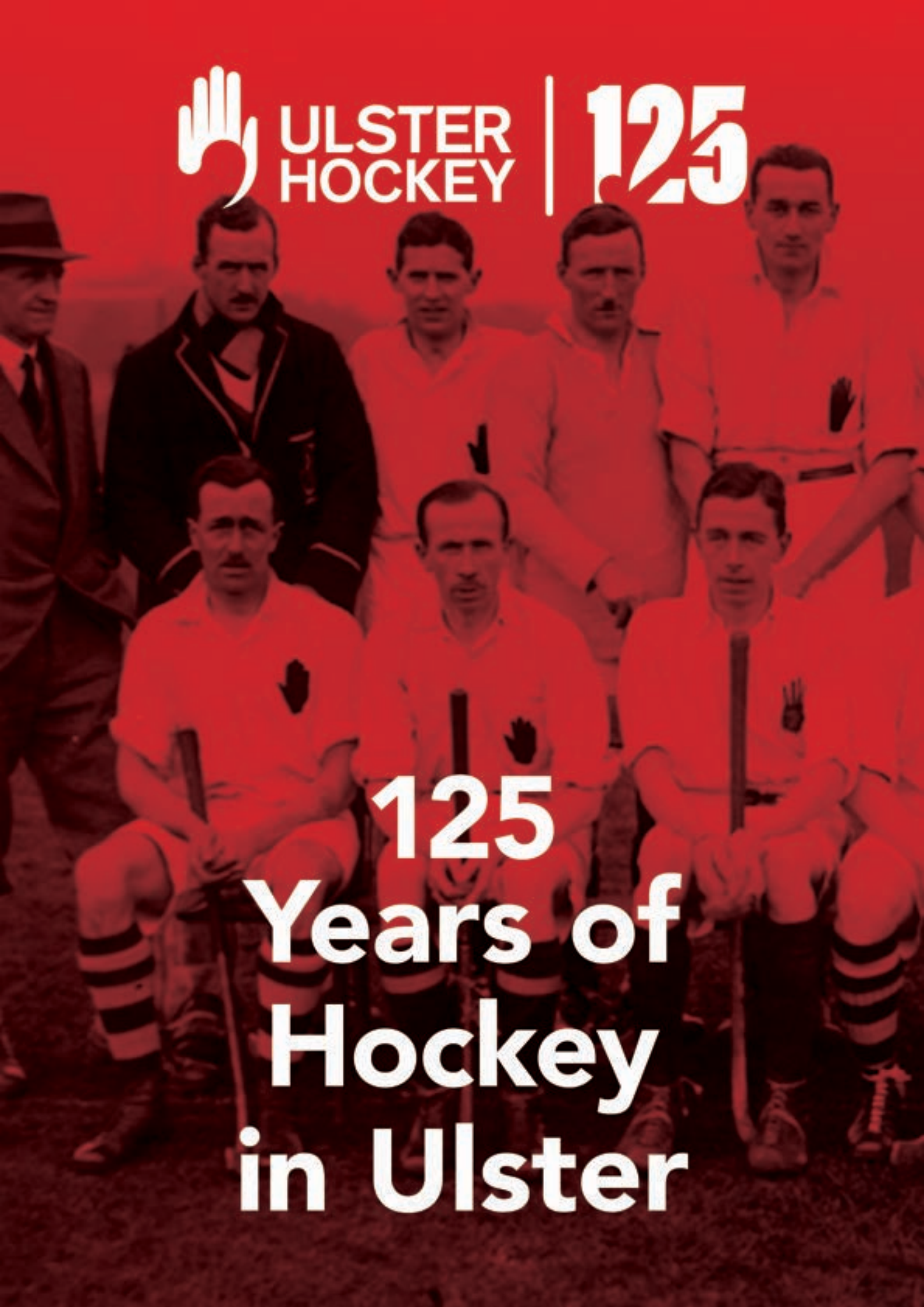
Should there only be one 1st XI team in Division 1 or 2, then there will be automatic promotion and relegation of the highest 1st XI team and the 10th placed team in the Premier League. In this instance there will be no play off between the 9th placed side in the Premier League and the second highest ranked 1st XI team.
- (6) In season 2026/27, in Divisions 1,2,3 & 4, four sides will be relegated from each division, to reduce the number of teams in each league (with the exception of the lowest league for

men's teams) to 10, with two teams being promoted/relegated from each league thereafter.



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