

**Club
Youth
Handbook
2025/26**



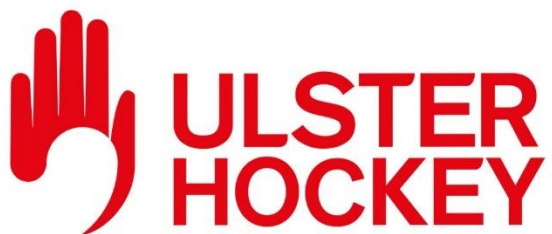
Ulster Hockey are excited to welcome all clubs, coaches, players and parents to a brand-new season of Youth Hockey in Ulster. This handbook has been compiled to serve as the go-to reference for the 2025/26 season, covering everything from competition regulations and safety standards to player development guidance and club responsibilities.

Each year, we strive to build on the success of the last, ensuring our sport remains inclusive, inspiring and enjoyable for all participants. This edition includes updated policies, streamlined procedures and new development opportunities, all designed to support growth across every level of youth hockey.

Youth Co-ordinators are encouraged to ensure this handbook is shared widely within their clubs so that everyone, from first-year players to experienced coaches, has the knowledge and tools to contribute to a positive and smooth running season. Adherence to these standards helps maintain the integrity, safety and quality of hockey for all involved.

What to Expect This Season

- An expanded calendar of festivals and competitions
- Greater focus on fair play and player wellbeing
- Clearer guidance on age eligibility, game formats and progression
- Enhanced communication and club engagement resources



Season
2024/25



40

Clubs Involved

7

Finals Days

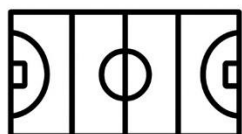


12,500

Youth Players

20+

Locations



744+

Games Played

30+

Blitz's



Last Season Winners:

Under 11

Girls



Cup Winners - **Lurgan**



Plate Winners - **Rainey**

Boys



Cup Winners - **Banbridge**



Plate Winners – **South Antrim**

Under 13

Girls



Cup Winners - **Dromore**



Plate Winners - **Pegasus**

Boys



Cup Winners - **Lisnagarvey**



Plate Winners - **Instonians**

Under 15

Girls



Performance Winners - **Pegasus**



Intermediate Winners - **Rainey**



Development 1 Winners - **Priorians**



Development 2 Winners - **Larne**

Boys



Performance Winners - **Cookstown**



Intermediate Winners – **North Down**



Development Winners - **Raphoe**

Season At a Glance

Important Dates:

U11 and U13

Girls and Boys

	Girls U11	Girls U13	Boys U11	Boys U13
Blitz 1	28 th September		5 th October	
Blitz 2	26 th October		2 nd November	
Blitz 3	30 th November		7 th December	
Blitz 4	15 th February		22 nd February	
Blitz 5 (U13 Girls Qualifier)	15 th March		22 nd March	

Finals Day Dates:

Under 11 – Sunday 22nd March 2026

Under 13 – Sunday 26th April 2026

U15

Finals Day:

Girls and Boys Under 15 – Sunday 19th April 2026

Club Hosting Duties (Girls)

Area	Hosting Duties	
Sunday 28 th September 2025	Host Club – U11	Host Club – U13
Belfast	Annadale	Annadale
Mid – Ulster	Dungannon	Dungannon
Northern	Ballymoney	Ballymoney
Newtownabbey	Larne	Larne
North Down	Dromore	Dromore
Southern	Lisnagarvey	Lisnagarvey
Sunday 26 th October 2025	Host Club – U11	Host Club – U13
Belfast	CI	CI
Mid-Ulster	Dungannon	Dungannon
Northern	Ballymena	Ballymena
Newtownabbey	Ballyclare	Ballyclare
North Down	Ards	Ards
Southern	Portadown	Portadown
Sunday 30 th November 2025	Host Club – U11	Host Club – U13
Belfast	Instonians	Instonians
Mid-Ulster	Antrim	Antrim
Northern	Ballymoney	Ballymoney
Newtownabbey	Castle	TBC
North Down	Bangor	Bangor
Southern	Banbridge	Banbridge
	WINTER BREAK (INDOOR)	
Sunday 15 th February 2026	Host Club – U11	Host Club – U13
Belfast	NICS	NICS
Mid-Ulster	Cookstown	Cookstown
Northern	Coleraine	Coleraine
Newtownabbey	Parkview	Parkview
North Down	North Down	North Down
Southern	Armagh	Armagh
Sunday 15 th March 2026 (U13 Qualifier)	Host Club – U11	Host Club – U13
Belfast	Harlequins	Playball, Stormont
Mid-Ulster	Randalstown	Playball, Stormont
Northern	Coleraine	Playball, Stormont
Newtownabbey	Elks	Playball, Stormont
North Down	Ballynahinch	Playball, Stormont
Southern	Lurgan	Playball, Stormont

Club Hosting Duties (Boys)

Area	Hosting Duties	
5th October 2025	Host Club - U11	Host Club - U13
Belfast	NICS	NICS
Northern	Antrim	Antrim
Southern	Cookstown	Cookstown
2nd November 2025		
Belfast	Annadale	Annadale
Northern	Bangor	Bangor
Southern	Cookstown	Cookstown
7th December 2025		
Belfast	Instonians	Instonians
Northern	North Down	North Down
Southern	Armagh	Armagh
22nd February 2026		
Belfast	Lisnagarvey	Lisnagarvey
Northern	Parkview	Parkview
Southern	Banbridge	Banbridge
22nd March 2026		
Belfast	Instonians	Instonians
Northern	Mossley	Mossley
Southern	Portadown	Portadown

Match Format

Match formats may vary slightly depending on age group, but all games are structured to encourage participation, development and enjoyment.

Age Group	Format	Duration	Pitch Size	Ball Type
Under 9	4 a side	8 mins	Eighths	Mini Ball/Standard Ball
Under 11	6 a side	8-12 mins	Thirds or Quarters	Standard Ball
Under 13	8 a side	8-12 mins	Half	Standard Ball
Under 15	11 a side	4 x 15 mins	Full	Standard Ball

No scores are officially recorded at U11 and U13 Blitz's.

U13 Qualifiers will include competitive elements and scores will be kept.

Rolling substitutions are encouraged.

1. Player & Team Expectations

To ensure the smooth running of all youth hockey events, all teams are expected to:

Arrive 15–30 minutes early for warm-up and briefing (if necessary).

Rotate players where possible to ensure equal playing time.

Respect opponents, umpires and volunteers at all times.

Shake hands (or use agreed sportsmanship gesture) at the end of each game.

Umpires' decisions are final — coaches are expected to model respectful behaviour regardless of the result.

2. Match Kit Requirements

Each player must bring:

Club Shirt

Ulster Hockey strongly recommend that shin-protectors and mouth guards are worn at all times by outfield players (inclusive of training sessions/games). [FIH Rules of Hockey 2023](#)

Appropriate footwear

Stick suitable for age/height

Weather-appropriate clothing (base layers, gloves, hat if needed)

Water bottle

Goalkeepers must be in full protective kit and trained in its safe use. No helmet = no game.

3. Hosting Club Responsibilities

Set up pitch cones/goals and provide match balls.

Ensure toilets and shelter are accessible.

Provide a basic first aid kit and know emergency procedures.

Organise umpires (where possible) and communicate the running order.

Create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all visiting clubs.

4. Spectator Guidelines

Parents and supporters are encouraged to:

Stay on the designated side of the pitch. Parents and spectators are not permitted on any pitch at any time.

Cheer positively — no coaching from the sideline.

Respect Umpires, Young Umpires and all volunteers at all times.

Please refer to: [Ulster Hockey Participant Code of Conduct 2023-2024](#)

5. Umpiring of Games

Blitzes provide an excellent opportunity not only to develop young players but also to nurture the next generation of umpires. Just as we focus on skill development for athletes, it is equally important to invest in the growth of young umpires, offering them valuable experience in a supportive environment. It is imperative that **respect is shown to all umpires at all times**, regardless of age, as their role is critical to the success of the game. Any form of abuse—whether from players, coaches or spectators—will not be tolerated. Strict enforcement will be applied, with consequences for individuals who violate this policy, ensuring that our tournaments remain respectful and positive experiences for all involved.

6. Accidents

If a match is suspended because of an accident or injury where no offence occurred, it shall be re-started with a bully close to the spot where the accident occurred.

Players who are cut or bleeding will be required to leave the pitch immediately and shall not be allowed to return until the bleeding has been suppressed or stopped.

It is imperative that ALL accidents are recorded in full using the *UHU Code of Ethics*. You can find this form in the link below:

<https://ulsterhockey.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/UHU-Code-of-Ethics-for-Young-People.pdf>

Please also inform Ulster Hockey's Youth Development Officer (jack.kyle@ulsterhockey.com)

7. Incidents

An incident differs from an accident as this is something that may have happened intentionally. Bullying and Physical or Mental abuse are all examples of incidents.

It is imperative that ALL incidents are recorded using the *UHU Code of Ethics*. Please find the document in the link. Here you will find both an accident and incident form:

<https://ulsterhockey.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/UHU-Code-of-Ethics-for-Young-People.pdf>

Please also inform Ulster Hockey's Youth Development Officer (jack.kyle@ulsterhockey.com) and when necessary, Ulster Hockey's Safe Guarding Children Officer, Hilary Reid (hilaryreid@talktalk.net).

8. Fair Play

Rough or dangerous play shall not be allowed, nor any behaviour which in the opinion of the umpire, amounts to misconduct.

Players must not intentionally use any part of their body to play the ball.

Players must not use the rounded side of the stick when playing the ball and when striking the ball. The stick must in no way cause danger, nor lead to dangerous play or be intimidating to any opponent.

Players must not play in any way that is dangerous.

Players must not kick the ball.

Players must not hold, charge, kick, shove, intentionally trip, or strike any player or umpire.

Coaches and spectators must always remain respectful. Challenges to decisions should be directed courteously and if possible, through the team captain.

Coaches are expected to manage the discipline of their players.

9. Players

Players are only permitted to participate for one club at a time in the Ulster Hockey Youth League Programme, i.e. players cannot play for two clubs in the youth leagues, and this additionally applies for those who train/play with two different age groups at two different clubs.

If a child transfers clubs after January, they are not permitted to play competitive games for the club until the next season.

10. Game Rules

Some rules have been adapted by Ulster Hockey. All other rules of senior hockey will apply as per issued by the International Hockey Federation:

<https://www.fih.hockey/static-assets/pdf/fih-rules-of-hockey-June23-update.pdf>

Weather Policies and Cancellations

1. Overview

The safety and wellbeing of players, coaches and spectators is Ulster Hockey's top priority. All decisions regarding blitz cancellations due to adverse weather must balance safety with the aim of delivering as much hockey as possible throughout the season.

2. Host Club Responsibility

For all U11 and U13 Blitz Days, the host club is responsible for assessing local conditions and making the final decision regarding playability.

The host club should:

Monitor weather conditions closely in the 24 hours leading up to the event.

Conduct a pitch inspection (if applicable) no later than 2 hours before the scheduled start time.

Consider player safety, pitch surface conditions, travel risks and available shelter for teams and supporters.

3. Recommended Cancellation Criteria

A cancellation or postponement should be strongly considered if:

Standing water or ice makes the pitch unsafe.

Visibility is significantly reduced (e.g. fog).

Severe weather warnings are issued (e.g. yellow/orange/red weather alerts).

Lightning is forecast or observed in the area.

Wind speeds are high enough to pose danger.

Temperatures fall below safe limits for extended exposure (especially for younger players).

If the weather forecasts warm conditions, please schedule in more water breaks.

4. Communication Procedure

If an event is cancelled:

The host club must inform all participating teams at least 90 minutes in advance, where possible.

Notification should be sent via the primary agreed method (e.g. WhatsApp, email).

The decision should also be relayed to the Youth Development Officer for Ulster Hockey.

5. Rescheduling Guidelines

Where a cancellation occurs:

The Youth Development Officer will assess if the blitz or tournament can be rescheduled within the existing calendar.

In some cases, especially for non-competitive age groups, the event may be cancelled outright to avoid congestion later in the season.

Player Expectations

1. Code of Conduct - Ulster Hockey Participant Code of Conduct 2023-2024

2. Social Media Guidelines – Social-Media-Websites

3. Child Protection & Code of Conduct

The Ulster Hockey Union is fully committed to adhering to child protection guidelines and the established code of conduct is of utmost importance in ensuring the safety, well-being and positive development of all young participants. These guidelines are in place to create a secure environment where children can enjoy and grow through hockey without fear of harm or misconduct. Every individual involved—whether a coach, player, parent or volunteer—must strictly follow these protocols to safeguard the welfare of the children. Any breach of these standards will be taken seriously, with appropriate actions taken to uphold the integrity and safety of our community.

It is essential that all members of the Ulster Hockey community adhere to the guidelines outlined in the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport*

(<https://www.sportni.org/ChildProtection/codeofethicslow.pdf>)

If you have any queries regarding child protection, please contact Ulster Hockey's Designated Safeguarding Children Officer – Hilary Reid.

Phone: 07802 381444

Email: hilaryreid@talktalk.net

4. Sportsmanship & Respect:



Clubs and schools must take active responsibility for the behaviour and actions of “**participants**” during and after matches.

The term “**participants**” includes:

- Players
- Team Officials
- Spectators
- Teachers
- Pupils
- Umpires
- Parents
- This list is not exhaustive

The following is regarded as conduct that is improper, unfair and unacceptable:

Participants must not :

Verbally/physically abuse or be hostile towards any other participant, person or member of the public.

Dispute, protest or react in a provocative or disapproving manner towards any decision made by an umpire/official or otherwise act in an inappropriate way.

Use rude, abusive, racist, sectarian or sexist language inappropriate gestures.

Spectators must NOT :

Encroach on to the playing area or, where there is a fence around a pitch, go inside it.

Watch matches from the team dugouts or team officials benches.

Retaliate if they are subject to provocative behaviour by an opposition spectator or player.

Enter umpires’ or team dressing rooms unless by invitation or to provide assistance.

Public Statements

Public statements (including those made in the press, websites, e-mail, social media, radio or television) must be fair and reasonable and must NOT involve a personal attack on another player, umpire, official, club/school or any other person or body which could bring the game into disrepute.

Competitions & Events

Under 9

There will be three under 9 blitzes organised throughout the year. More information will be announced during the season.

Under 11

Girls

- 5 Blitz's throughout the year.
- 5 will be regional and in your local area – no scores kept.
- No Qualifying Blitz.
- Option of going to a different area to play different teams for Blitz 3.
- All Clubs can enter Finals Day – One team per club.

Boys

- 5 Blitz's throughout the year.
- 5 will be regional and in your local area – no scores kept.
- No Qualifying Blitz.
- Option of going to a different area to play different teams for Blitz 3.
- All clubs can enter Finals Day (more than one team per club will depend on the number of teams entered at the time).

Blitz	Type	Grouping	Objective
Blitz 1	Regional	Local	Ease into season, minimal travel
Blitz 2	Regional	Local	Build team familiarity
Blitz 3	Crossover	Mixed	New opponents
Blitz 4	Regional	Local	Return to local focus
Blitz 5	Regional	Local	Preparation for Finals Day

Under 13:

Girls

- 5 Blitz's throughout the year.
- 3 will be regional – no scores kept.
- Blitz 3 will be a cross over event where teams can play opponents from other regions.
- Blitz 5 will be the qualifying blitz (more information closer to the time).

For Qualifying:

- All clubs invited and all clubs play some form of round robin tournament.
- The best teams then progress to Finals Day regardless of club region.
- 3 different groups.
- All clubs can enter qualifying event – one team per club.

Blitz	Type	Grouping	Objective
Blitz 1	Regional	Local	Ease into season, minimal travel
Blitz 2	Regional	Local	Build team familiarity
Blitz 3	Crossover	Mixed	New opponents
Blitz 4	Regional	Local	Return to local focus
Blitz 5	Qualifiers	Fully mixed	Qualifier Blitz

Boys

- 5 Blitz's throughout the year.
- 4 will be regional – no scores kept.
- No Qualifying Blitz.
- All clubs can enter Finals Day (more than one team per club will depend on the number of teams entered at the time).

Blitz	Type	Grouping	Objective
Blitz 1	Regional	Local	Ease into season, minimal travel
Blitz 2	Regional	Local	Build team familiarity
Blitz 3	Crossover	Mixed	New opponents
Blitz 4	Regional	Local	Return to local focus
Blitz 5	Regional	Local	Last games before Final Day

Under 15

Please follow the links provided below or scan the QR code to keep up to date with the scores and fixtures for this season.

If you have the Tournify app downloaded, please search the name of the league to find the tournament:

Girl's Under 15 League (1st XI)

<https://www.tournify.uk/live/girlsu151stxi>



Girl's Under 15 League (2nd, 3rd, 4th XI)

<https://www.tournify.uk/live/girlsu152nd3rd4thxi>



Boy's Under 15 League

<https://www.tournify.uk/live/boysu15>



Rules for Different Age Groups

Under 9s

This season, our hockey program will include Under 9 as part of our commitment to growing the sport from the grassroots up. This age group is a vital step in a young player's development, providing a positive, fun and engaging environment. The focus for this age group is on fundamental skills, teamwork and confidence-building.

Ulster Hockey are adopting a smaller-sided, modified version of the game that is more suitable for this age group.

Why This Format Works for U9 Players:

More Touches, More Involvement: Smaller teams mean each player gets more time on the ball. This means more time to learn which leads to an increase in confidence and skill development.

Simplified Rules: A more accessible version of the game allows children to learn core skills without being overwhelmed.

Age-Appropriate Pitch Sizes: Playing on reduced pitches makes the game more manageable, fun and safe.

Focus on Fun and Learning: Emphasis on enjoyment, creativity and positive sporting values over competition.

Builds a Strong Foundation: Sets up young players for long-term success and smooth progression through the hockey pathway.

By starting with this format, we are giving our youngest players the best possible introduction to hockey - one that is safe, enjoyable and encourages a lifelong love for the game.

RULE 1 – AGE QUALIFICATION

Players **MUST** be in Primary 5 or below as of the day of the blitz / tournament.

RULE 2 – TEAMS

The game is played between two teams. They shall each have a maximum of 4 players permitted on the pitch at any one time.

There are no Goalkeepers at this age group.

Teams can be either all Girls, all Boys or mixed.

RULE 3 – SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions are unlimited throughout the game.

RULE 4 – DURATION OF GAME

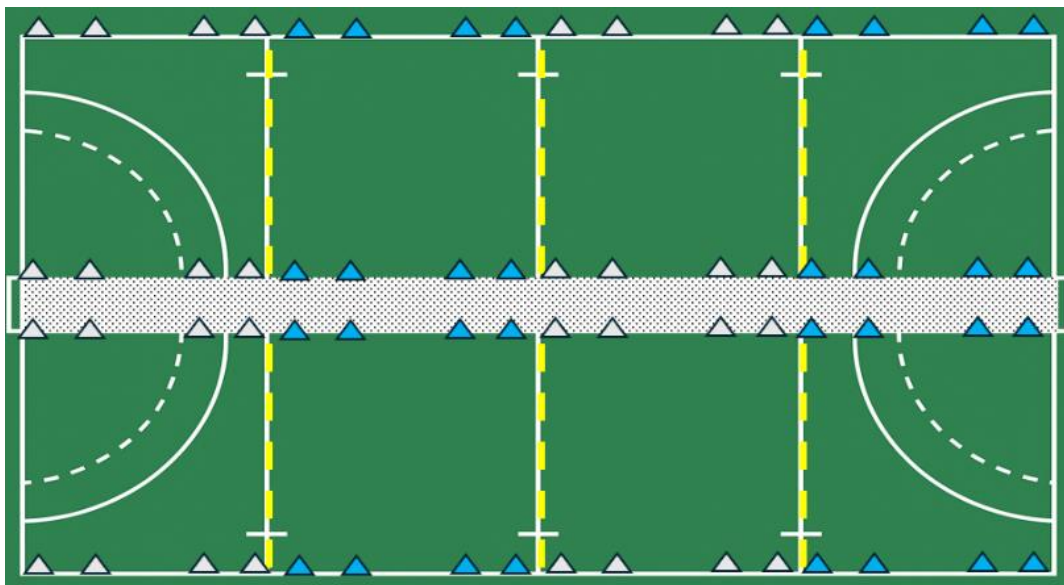
Games will be played for 8–10-minute duration straight. There will be no half time or changing of sides.

RULE 5 – THE PITCH

For U9s the pitch will be split into 1/8's

Each pitch should have 4 mini goals (2 at each end) that can be marked with cones. Goals should be 2m or roughly 2 stick lengths.

In the image below, the white strip is where coaches and players stand.



RULE 6 – OTHER

Goals can be scored from anywhere on the pitch.

There are no scoring zones and no penalty corners.

If a free is given to the attacking team within 5m of the goal, the ball is moved back 5m.

Very little umpiring is needed at this age. Umpires are encouraged to let the game go and allow children to learn from playing.

An umpire is there to ensure the game is always safe.

BLITZ DATES:

3 blitz dates throughout the year.

3 different locations.

Under 11 (Super 6's)

RULE 1 – AGE QUALIFICATION

Players **MUST** be in Primary 5, 6 or 7 or born after 1st July 2014 as of the day of the blitz / tournament. Players in Primary 4 or below should not be playing in U11 Blitz's unless approved by Ulster Hockey Youth Development Officer.

RULE 2 – TEAMS

The game is played between two teams. Each team shall have a maximum of six players on the pitch at any one time.

Teams are encouraged to play with a Goalkeeper; however, Goalkeepers are not compulsory at Regional Blitz's.

Teams are permitted to play with six outfield players.

For Qualifications and Final's Day, Goalkeeper's are compulsory.

Squads are made up of no more than 10 players to allow for sufficient game time.

Teams should be separated by gender at Super 6s. (please contact YDO for exceptions)

RULE 3 – SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions are unlimited throughout the game.

RULE 4 – DURATION OF GAME

Games will be played for 8–12-minute durations. There will be no half time or changing of sides.

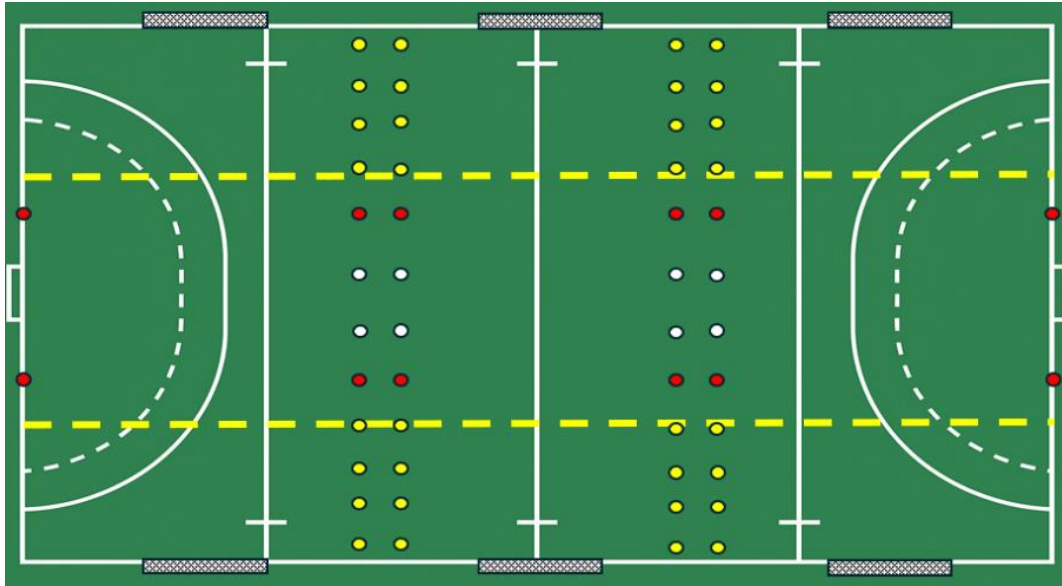
RULE 5 – THE PITCH

For U11 the pitch should be split into thirds, with run off space between pitches. (pitch can be split into 4 smaller pitches to accommodate for many teams at one event)

Scoring Zone Markers (in yellow in below image) should run the length of the pitch from the Penalty Corner injection mark.

The lines (made from dots) in the image below are for coaches and players only. Ideally, these lines should be set out using white and yellow cones. Yellow cones from baseline to scoring zone and white cones from scoring zone to scoring zone.

Long corners will be played from the “red cone line” coinciding with where the ball went off the pitch.



RULE 6 – REVERSE HIT

Reverse hit is not allowed in the scoring zone at Under 11.

Reverse sweep and flick are allowed in the scoring zone.

Reverse hit can be used anywhere else on the pitch.

RULE 7 – SHOOTING

Hits and slaps must be kept low and where available, backboard height. If no backboard is available, the goal is determined by Umpires discretion.

The ball can be flicked into the net. There are no height restrictions for flicks.

The ball can be deflected into the net. There are no height restrictions for deflections.

RULE 8 – LONG CORNERS

If the attacking team win a free inside the scoring zone, the ball is taken back in line with the red cones. The defending team must be 3 metres away from the ball.

The ball can be hit straight into the scoring zone from a long corner, however there **MUST** be an intended passing target. Balls must not be hit in with the hope of a deflection. There must be a clear intended passing target.

RULE 9 – SIDELINE BALL

If the ball goes out of play at the sideline inside the scoring zone, it is a sideline ball.

RULE 10 – AERIAL BALL

Aerials are allowed at Under 11 hockey. All rules are in line with FIH Rule 9.10 (<https://www.fih.hockey/static-assets/pdf/fih-rules-of-hockey-June23-update.pdf>)

RULE 11 – REQUESTING ADDITIONAL TEAM ENTRIES FOR A BLITZ

Ulster Hockey strongly recommends that you make sure you have an accurate number of teams for both U11 and U13 hockey from the start of the season. This allows the host clubs to plan accordingly. Additional U11 and U13 teams can participate in a particular blitz at the host-coordinator's discretion if sufficient notice is provided. Host coordinators have the right to refuse entry for additional teams if seven days' notice is not provided or if an additional team would result in a significant increase in pitch time.

RULE 12 – INABILITY TO ATTEND BLITZ

If a club is unable to attend a regional Blitz, it is imperative to notify the host club as soon as possible (this will normally be the Youth Officer of the host club). Clubs who persistently do not notify their unavailability/inability to travel should be reported to Ulster Hockey and their future involvement will be reviewed appropriately.

The Ulster Hockey Youth Development Officer should also be contacted (jack.kyle@ulsterhockey.com)

RULE 13 – NOTIFICATION OF MATCH SCHEDULES

Schedules are the responsibility of the **HOST CLUB**. Ulster Hockey will endeavour to help in this process as it can be time consuming. However, host clubs must take on this responsibility.

Fixtures for blitzes must be released 3 days prior to the event. This is to allow sufficient time for clubs to make sufficient arrangements for both travel and to check the availability of players, coaches and volunteers.

How to Create Match Schedule - https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/18zx-DL2CC-1xhY8UO5cpoz7l-z_NjrtfRr3oK7AN7Zl/edit?usp=sharing

RULE 14 - RESULTS

There will be **no results** recorded for U9/U11/U13 blitz days. Scores will be recorded for Qualifiers.

RULE 15 - INFRINGEMENT WITHIN THE SCORING ZONE

For U11, if the free hit is awarded to an attacker within the scoring zone it must be taken back to the red cones of the in line with where the infringement happened. All players except the taker must be a minimum of 3 metres from the ball.

RULE 16 – PENALTY STROKE

For U11's/U13's, a penalty stroke may be applied in the occurrence of repeated deliberate infringements in the scoring zone.

REQUESTING ADDITIONAL TEAM ENTRIES FOR A BLITZ

Ulster Hockey strongly recommends that you make sure you have an accurate number of teams for both U11 and U13 hockey from the start of the season. This allows the host clubs to plan accordingly.

Additional U11 and U13 teams can participate in a particular blitz at the host-coordinator's discretion if sufficient notice is provided. Host coordinators have the right to refuse entry for additional teams if seven days' notice is not provided or if an additional team would result in a significant increase in pitch time.

Under 13 (Extreme 8's)

RULE 1 – AGE QUALIFICATION

Players **MUST** be in Year 8 or 9 or born after 1st July 2012 as of the day of the blitz / tournament. Primary school players should not be playing in U13 Blitz's unless approved by Ulster Hockey Youth Development Officer.

RULE 2 – TEAMS

The game is played between two teams. Each team have a maximum eight players permitted on the pitch at any one time.

Teams are encouraged to play with a goalkeeper however Goalkeepers are not compulsory at Regional Blitz's. Teams are permitted to play with eight outfield players if they do not have a Goalkeeper.

For Ulster Hockey U13 club Finals Day and regional Qualifying Blitz's, Goalkeepers are compulsory.

Squads are made up of a maximum of 12 players to allow for sufficient match time for all.

Teams must be separated by gender.

RULE 3 – SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions are unlimited throughout the game.

RULE 4 – DURATION OF GAME

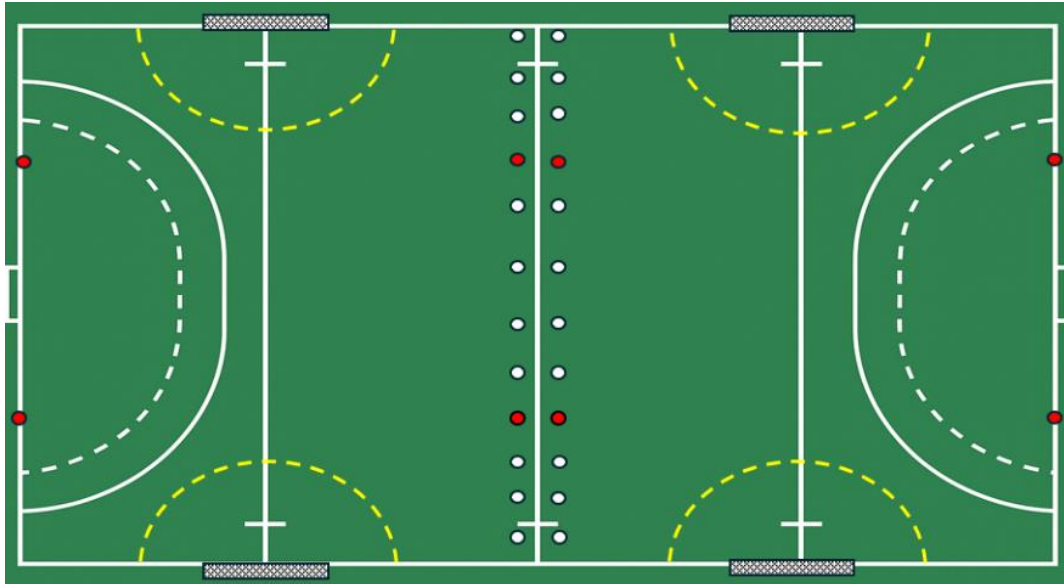
Games will be played for 8–12 minute duration straight. There will be no half time or changing of sides.

RULE 5 – THE PITCH

The pitch will be half of a full-sized pitch for girls and boys, with a run-off between the two pitches.

The circle will have a radius of 15 metres from the by-line (15 steps either side of each post, 15 steps out from the centre of the goal and join).

Please ensure the pitch layout is consistent and followed strictly to allow uniformity across all locations



RULE 6 – REVERSE HIT

Reverse hit is allowed anywhere on the pitch at Under 13.

RULE 7 – FOUL IN CIRCLE

If a foul is committed by the defending team inside the circle, a “Power Play” is awarded.

If a foul is committed by the attacking team inside the circle, then a hit out is awarded. This can be taken from in line with the point of the infringement, anywhere between the top of the circle and the “line” of red cones.

POWER PLAY (U13 ONLY)

What is a Power Play?

A Power Play is a modified version of a short corner designed to suit younger age groups, like U13s. It provides a safer, development-focused way to practice attacking set plays, without the risks associated with full short corners.

How It Works:

- The ball starts outside the top of the circle, placed in the centre of the pitch (in line with red cones).
- The attacking team has 4 players involved in the Power Play:
 - 1 player starts with the ball.
 - 3 supporting attackers must begin at least 5 metres away from the ball but may be positioned anywhere inside the circle.
- The defending team has 2 outfield defenders inside the circle.
- They may position themselves freely but must stay at least 5 metres away from the ball at the start.
- The goalkeeper starts behind the goal line.
- All other players from both teams must remain in the opposite circle until the Power Play begins.

Movement & Rules:

- Once the ball has been touched by the attacking team, the remaining players from both teams are permitted to run back into the circle.
- The attacking team must move the ball 5 metres *before* it enters the circle.
- This can be done by carrying the ball or making a pass outside the circle to meet the 5m rule.
- Once the ball has travelled 5 metres, the ball may enter the circle.
- The first shot on goal must stay on the ground – it cannot be lifted, just like in a traditional short corner.

Purpose of the Power Play:

1. Develops team shape, passing under pressure and decision-making.
2. Introduces the principles of short corners in a safe, age-appropriate way.
3. Encourages structured attacking play and defensive organisation.

*Please note – Power Plays can take time to get set up so please encourage players to do this as quickly as possible.

Power Play example - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQADBieHY-8>

RULE 8 – REQUESTING ADDITIONAL TEAM ENTRIES FOR A BLITZ

Ulster Hockey strongly recommends that you make sure you have an accurate number of teams for both U11 and U13 hockey from the start of the season. This allows the host clubs to plan accordingly. Additional U11 and U13 teams can participate in a particular blitz at the host-coordinator's discretion if sufficient notice is provided. Host coordinators have the right to refuse entry for additional teams if seven days' notice is not provided or if an additional team would result in a significant increase in pitch time.

RULE 9 – INABILITY TO ATTEND BLITZ

If a club is unable attend a regional Blitz, it is imperative to notify the host club as soon as possible (this will normally be the Youth Officer of the host club). Clubs who persistently do not notify their unavailability/inability to travel should be reported to Ulster Hockey and their future involvement will be reviewed appropriately.

The Ulster Hockey Youth Development Officer should also be contacted (jack.kyle@ulsterhockey.com)

RULE 10 – AERIAL BALL

Aerials are allowed at Under 13 hockey. All rules are in line with FIH Rule 9.10 (<https://www.fih.hockey/static-assets/pdf/fih-rules-of-hockey-June23-update.pdf>)

RULE 11 – NOTIFICATION OF MATCH SCHEDULES

Schedules are the responsibility of the **HOST CLUB**.

Fixtures for blitzes must be released 3 days prior to the event. This is to allow sufficient time for clubs to make sufficient arrangements for both travel and to check the availability of players, coaches and volunteers.

RULE 12 - RESULTS

There will be **no results** recorded for U9/U11/U13 blitz days. Scores will be recorded for Qualifiers.

RULE 13 – PENALTY STROKE

For U11's/U13's, a penalty stroke may be applied in the occurrence of repeated deliberate infringements in the scoring zone.

Under 15

RULE 1 – AGE QUALIFICATION

Players participating in any U15 program should be born after the 1st July 2010 (aged 13-15 / in school Years 10 and 11). Players born before this date will be eligible to play adult club hockey as they will have passed their 15th birthday.

Players turning 15 throughout the season will be permitted to play in the youth leagues.

RULE 2 – TEAMS

The game is played between two teams.

They shall each have a maximum eleven players permitted on the pitch at any one time.

Goalkeepers are compulsory.

Squads are limited to 16 players.

Teams must be separated by gender.

RULE 3 – SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions are unlimited throughout the game.

RULE 4 – DURATION OF GAME

Games will consist of 4 quarters.

Ulster Hockey advise 15 minutes per quarter.

A 2-minute interval between each quarter and a 5-minute interval at half time is advised.

RULE 5 – THE PITCH

11v 11 games will be played on a full-sized hockey pitch.

RULE 6 – FIXTURES

Every effort must be made to fulfil every fixture throughout the season, regardless of the potential outcome. This is crucial for the benefit of the children, ensuring they can play, while also respecting the significant effort involved in booking pitches and the time and commitment of players, coaches and families who travel to participate.

It is up to the Home team to organise and book the fixture.

The home team must provide **3 separate dates over 2 different days** for the away team. For example, 2 Sunday dates and a Friday date. If the Home team's pitch is not available, the fixture can be reversed. If an agreement cannot be made by both teams, then the match will be null and void. No points will be given to either team.

If a home team has provided 3 dates (proof will be required i.e. screenshot of messages sent) as proposed above, and the opposing team cannot fulfil the fixture, then the game will be recorded as a 3-0 win to the team that can fulfil the fixture and they will be awarded 3 points.

There will be a 1-point deduction for repeated fixtures not fulfilled.

RULE 7 – PLAY BY DATES

This will be heavily monitored this year. As stated above, if a team cannot fulfil a fixture before the play by date, the above ruling will apply.

If both teams cannot fulfil the fixture, the above ruling applies.

Play by dates for fixtures are on the Tournify link.

It is important to note that the play by dates are the *play by dates* and not the play on dates.

Clubs can play these games weeks before the date if they want.

RULE 8 – PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

To support fair competition, the following will apply to all 1st XI teams:

Clubs will be required to nominate 8 players that will be starred. These 8 players cannot play on any team other than their nominated 1st XI.

Teams must also submit a Google form team sheet prior to every match they play.

Eligibility Rules

- Players starred for a 1st XI squad may not play in a lower team (2nd, 3rd, 4th XI)
- Clubs must be able to justify selections if queried and keep a clear record of squad lists for each matchday.

Monitoring & Enforcement

Monitoring

- Clubs will be required to submit matchday squads via a Google Form ahead of every fixture.

Consequences of Misuse

- First offence: Forfeiture of the match in question
- Further offences: Point deductions

Protest & Review Process

If a club believes their opponent has fielded an ineligible player, please contact Ulster Hockey's Youth Development Officer.

RULE 9 - RESULTS

Scores will be recorded for U15 matches. Scores will be required to be submitted by the home team no longer than **1 day** after playing the game. Scores should be submitted to the U15 results WhatsApp group.

The maximum score that can be recorded will be 7 goals. For example, 7 – 0, 8 – 1, 9 – 2 etc

Scores will be updated every Monday.

To be added to this group, please contact Jack Kyle (YDO) by email (jack.kyle@ulsterhockey.com) or mobile (07521777525).

RULE 10 – PENALTY STROKE

For U15 a penalty stroke may be awarded in line with FIH Senior Hockey rules.

RULE 11 – OWN GOALS

Own goal ruling has been removed from all Youth League age categories, therefore should not be awarded. A long corner is to be awarded instead.

INABILITY TO FULFIL A FIXTURE

If a club is unable to fulfil a scheduled fixture, it is imperative to notify the opposing/host team as soon as possible (this will normally be the Youth Officer of the host club).

Clubs who persistently do not notify their unavailability/inability to travel should be reported to Ulster Hockey and their future involvement in the league will be reviewed appropriately.

The Ulster Hockey Youth Development Officer should also be contacted (jack.kyle@ulsterhockey.com)

Recommended Equipment List

Essential Kit

Playing Top

Skort / Shorts

Hockey Socks

Shin Guards/ Mouthguard – *must be worn to play*

Hockey Stick (correct size for player)

Shoes

Weather Protection

Base Layers / Thermals

Waterproof Jacket / Raincoat

Warm Hat & Gloves (if cold)

Sunscreen (if sunny)

Health & Hydration

Full Water Bottle

Healthy Snack / Small Packed Lunch

Any Personal Medication (e.g. inhaler, EpiPen)

Towel (optional for wet weather)

Other Helpful Items

Small Sports Bag or Rucksack

Change of Clothes (for after matches)

Plastic Bag (for wet gear)

Contacts

Role	Name	Email	Phone Number
Chief Executive Officer	Marc Scott	marc.scott@ulsterhockey.com	07889363477
Youth Development Officer	Jack Kyle	jack.kyle@ulsterhockey.com	07521777525
Schools Activation Officer	Harry Templeton	harry.templeton@ulsterhockey.com	07805765039
Talent Pathways Manager	Shirley McCay	shirley.mccay@ulsterhockey.com	07921211018
Designated Safeguarding Children Officer	Hilary Reid	hilaryreid@talktalk.net	07802381444
Head of Development	Jonathan McMeekin	jonathan.mcmeekin@ulsterhockey.com	07912320225
Club Development Officer	Ian Hughes	michelle.mcmillan@ulsterhockey.com	07562953263
Inclusion and Diversity Officer	Eamonn McFerran	eamonn@ulsterhockey.com	07562688989
Workforce Development Officer	Michelle McMillan	michelle.mcmillan@ulsterhockey.com	07562953263
Administrative Officer	Nicki Bayes	admin@ulsterhockey.com	02890701417
Communications Officer	Andy Morrison	andy.morrision@ulsterhockey.com	07355094282

Young Umpires Programme

Ulster Hockey in partnership with Ulster Umpires Association, Irish Hockey Umpires Association and Hockey Ireland run a Young Umpires programme. Please find the link below with all the information needed about this programme and how to get your young members involved:

- <https://ulsterhockey.com/get-involved/umpiring/young-umpires-programme/>



Club Regions (Girls)

Region	Club
Belfast	Annadale
	Belfast Harlequins
	CI Ladies
	Club KV
	Instonians
	NICS
	Pegasus
Mid Ulster	Antrim
	Cookstown
	Dungannon
	Omagh
	Rainey
	Randalstown
Newtownabbey	Ballyclare
	Castle
	Larne
	Mossley
	Parkview
	Owls
	Ulster University Elks
North Down	Ards
	Ballynahinch
	Bangor
	North Down
	Dromore
	Saintfield
Northern	Ballymoney
	Coleraine
	Limavady
	Priorians
	Raphoe
	Ballymena
Southern	Armagh
	Portadown
	Banbridge
	Lisnagarvey
	Lurgan
	South Antrim
	Newry
	Tullyvallen

Club Regions (Boys)

Region	Club
Belfast	Annadale
	Harlequins
	Instonians
	Saintfield
	NICS
	Lisnagarvey
Northern	Antrim
	Ballymoney
	Bangor
	North Down
	Parkview
	Raphoe
	Ballynahinch
	Portrush
	Mossley
Southern	Armagh
	Banbridge
	Cookstown
	Kilkeel
	Portadown
	Newry Olympic
	South Antrim

