

APPENDIX D

CLUB OUTDOOR COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS

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Note – Text in *Italics* indicates an amendment to last season

DEFINITIONS

New Member: Any player who did not play for the club in the previous season or current season; any player who has played competitive hockey anywhere else since last played for the club (i.e. a returning player is a new member).

Home National Association: The National Association under which the player is recognized or first registered. Note: this is not the same as citizenship or nationality.

No Objection Certificate (NOC); A NOC is the FIH recognized document and process for National Associations to a) give permission to players to participate in competitions under another National Association and b) for a National Association to set regulations for allowing players from another National Association play in their competitions.

When a Hockey Ireland player (of any level) goes elsewhere they may well get asked for an NOC from Hockey Ireland, **each and every season** that they play in competitions under another National Association. Likewise, Hockey Ireland request NOC's from players who fall under another National Association, **each and every season** that they wish to play in Hockey Ireland Club Outdoor competitions. The Hockey Ireland NOC requirements are included below.

Release Letter: Hockey Ireland require a Release Letter from a player's previous club when the player's Home National Association is Hockey Ireland and they are returning from playing competitive hockey under another National Association. **Note:** When a player is moving club within Hockey Ireland, the provincial regulations for transfers applies.

Competitive Hockey (elsewhere in the world) 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 competition, providing they fulfil other eligibility criteria
- Recognised Franchise Leagues (pre-set each season by the Competitions Committee) outside of Europe, are excluded from the definition of Competitive Hockey and players whose home nation is Hockey Ireland playing in such competitions, can continue to be registered to their club and play in HI competition, providing they fulfil other eligibility criteria
- Season 26/27 recognised Franchise Leagues are: Hockey India League, Australia HockeyOne League

1. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS

1.1 Registered Bona Fide Player

Every player of each competing team in HI Club Outdoor Competitions must be a bona fide member of the club, i.e. must be registered on the Hockey Ireland Membership System (Gameday) in the current season to the Club in which they are a bona fide member (*refer to Appendix E - Clubs Player Registration Regulation*).

A player IS NOT considered a bona fide member if registered in two hockey jurisdictions at the same time (see section 6 – Fines and Penalties).

1.2 Club Outdoor Competition Eligibility

In order to be allowed play for a club in HI Club Outdoor Competitions every bona fide member of a club wishing to play must have played in an Outdoor Hockey competition for their club by (and including) 15th January in the current season or have played for their club in the preceding season, provided that they have not played competitive hockey** anywhere else in the world **in the intervening period (**in which case they are deemed to be a new member** – see section 2 below).

2. NEW MEMBERS

2.1 New Members Eligibility Date

Any **new member** to a club wishing to play in any HI Club Outdoor Competitions must have **played** for the club prior to and including January 15th in the current season (*Indoor Hockey does not count for outdoor eligibility*).

2.2 New Members Coming / Returning from Outside of Hockey Ireland

Any **new member** to a club coming from outside of Hockey Ireland and intending or likely to play in EYHL Division 1 and/or *Irish Senior Cup*, must provide to the Hockey Ireland Office, a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from their Home National Association, OR if their Home National Association is Hockey Ireland, a Release Letter from their last club. The NOC must conform to the FIH prescribed template, including the competition event and dates for release. A Release Letter must be on the club's headed paper, contain the player's name and DOB, the date of release and be signed by a Club Official (*see HI website for guidance on Registration, Player Transfers abroad*). **In addition, see section 5 below regarding Clearance to Play.**

3. NO OBJECTION CERTIFICATE – YEARLY REQUIREMENT

A player whose Home National Association is not Hockey Ireland is required to provide an NOC from their Home National Association at the start of each season they intend to participate in EYHLD1 and the Irish Senior Cup, unless they have received specific confirmation from Hockey Ireland that the requirement has ceased (i.e. due to longevity

of participation under Hockey Ireland competition). NOCs must be submitted five working days prior to the first match in which the player intends participating in. ***In addition, see section 5 below regarding Clearance to Play.***

4. RIGHT TO LIVE AND WORK IN IRELAND

Where a member of your club is from outside of Hockey Ireland and/or does not qualify to live or work in Ireland on foot of holding an IRL / UK / EU passport and is intending or likely to play in EYHL Division 1 and/or Irish Senior Cup, the player will need to provide information to Hockey Ireland to receive clearance to play for the for the season or period requested as follows:

- Evidence of an employment permit for a role other than employment with a hockey club or evidence of attending a second or third level college
- Where a player is employed by a hockey club, evidence of holding a Sports & Culture Employment Permit or a Working Holiday permit (ROI) or NI equivalent, will be required.

A club intending to register a player in this category will need to provide the player with the HI contact details (competitions@hockey.ie) and allow sufficient time for the processing of documentation to receive HI confirmation of Clearance to Play (see Section 5).

5. CLEARANCE TO PLAY

All NOC, Release Letter and Right to Live & Work paperwork must be submitted at least 5 working days before the club is seeking the player to be available for selection. Subject to the Release Letter / NOC / Right to Live & Work paperwork being in order, the Hockey Ireland Office will provide **email confirmation** of Clearance to Play to the player and club for the coming season / duration of the NOC / applicable permit. Evidence of player clearance to be retained by the club in case of queries.

6. ELIGIBILITY RESTRICTIONS

6.1 In Season Transfers

No player may play for more than one club in Hockey Ireland **Cup** Competitions in one season.

A player may play for more than one IHL club in one season, provided that the transfer is executed and completed in line with the receiving club provincial rules AND meets Hockey Ireland Club Outdoor Competition Eligibility Rules contained herein.

6.2 Age Limit Restriction

No player may play in a Hockey Ireland Club Outdoor Competition until they attain their 15th birthday.

If the 15th birthday occurs after 31st December and the player member has not yet played for the club due to an age restriction, the club must write to Hockey Ireland (competitions@hockey.ie) at least 5 (five) working days before the club is seeking the player to be available for selection to seek confirmation to play in an HI Club Outdoor Competition.

6.3 Current International Player Eligibility Restriction

No current international (as defined by Senior National Coach) may play for a team lower than the club 1st XI in a Hockey Ireland Club Outdoor Competition.

No current international of another National Association may play for a team lower than the club 1st XI in a Hockey Ireland Club Outdoor Competition or a competition sanctioned by Hockey Ireland.

7. EXCEPTIONS REQUESTS

7.1 Exception Requests

In the event of an exceptional circumstance clubs must write to the HI Chair of Competitions for consideration to be given an exemption.

Exemptions for consideration can include (but not limited to) cases such as genuine error leading to a delayed registration or in the case of injury preventing play, with satisfactory medical evidence being furnished to support the exemption request.

8. AUTHORITY

8.1 Eligibility Authority

The onus of proof regarding eligibility is on the registering team. The Outdoor SG shall decide any dispute regarding eligibility and shall be entitled to request such written or oral evidence, as it considers necessary. In the case of players returning /new to Ireland, clubs should retain the Hockey Ireland email that provides clearance to play.

The Outdoor SG shall have the right to restrict a player from playing below their clubs' 1st team.

Any appeal against a decision of the Outdoor SG on player eligibility shall be made in accordance with the Hockey Ireland Bye Laws Section 20. A player shall not play in a Hockey Ireland Clubs Outdoor Competition pending the outcome of an appeal.

8.2 Eligibility Queries

Queries relating to player eligibility will **only** be accepted from the following designated club officials, Club Secretary, Match Secretary, Team Manager. Queries submitted by individuals outside of these designated roles will not be accepted or responded to. Clubs are responsible for ensuring that all communications with the Hockey Ireland Office follow this protocol. This measure is in place to maintain consistency, accuracy, and accountability in competition administration.

All eligibility queries must be submitted by email to competitions@hockey.ie no later than 5:00 PM on the Tuesday prior to a weekend competition. Late queries may not be addressed in time for the relevant fixture.

Clubs are strongly encouraged to seek clarification on any player eligibility matters prior to the player taking the field. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action if an ineligible player participates in a match.

9. FINES AND PENALTIES

Fielding of an ineligible player is a very serious matter and can lead to expulsion of the team from the relevant competition and/or a fine of up to €1,500 and/or deduction of points and/or award of a 5-nil walkover to an opposing team. Such situations include:

- Playing a player whose last club was outside of Ireland prior to receiving Clearance to Play from HI following production and vetting of the required Release Letter
- Playing a player whose home National Association is not Hockey Ireland prior to receiving Clearance to Play for the coming period from HI following production and vetting of the required No Objection Certificate (NOC)
- Playing a player who is required to hold Right to Live & Work permission prior to receiving Clearance to Play from HI following production and vetting of the requested evidence.
- Playing a player who is registered and competing in another hockey National Association
- Playing a player who is not registered on the GameDay System or who has not renewed their membership for the current season
- Playing a player who is not eligible to play in a specific Cup Competition

Such matters will be considered by the Outdoors SG in accordance with these Regulations and the process outlined in the Hockey Ireland Constitution and the penalty to be applied shall be at the discretion of the Outdoors SG.

9.1 Fines

Failure to correctly complete player registration in the following instances will incur an automatic fine:

- Duplicating a new player on GameDay System, without executing the player transfer procedure from previous club - €100 per instance

Any member of the management team who does not have a current and valid Hockey Ireland membership will be considered the same as an ineligible player and the club and subject to the same penalties as detailed point 9 above.

10. EUROHOCKEY CLUB COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for Hockey Ireland Club Competitions does not automatically confer eligibility for EuroHockey Club Competitions. Any club participating in EuroHockey competition needs to familiarise themselves with EuroHockey player eligibility rules, particularly with regard to new members within the season.

Note: the current closing dates for submission of up to 35 eligible players is 15th September (EHL) AND 15th October (Trophy) competitions. Hockey Ireland approval of the bona fide eligibility of each player is required on the club's player list, prior to submission by Hockey Ireland to EuroHockey.