



SYDNEY MASTERS HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (SMHA) incorporated 1988

COMPETITION RULES - 2019

1. COMPETITION PLAYING FEES

- 1.1 **Competition playing fees for all teams will be invoiced in March and are to be paid in full by 30th April. The Board reserves the right to impose a suitable penalty (loss of all points and / or a fine up to \$200 in total) if fees are not paid in full by the designated date.**

Unfinancial teams will not be eligible to play in any finals series. Their position will be taken by the next highest qualified and financial team.

- 1.3 **Club/Team coordinators must immediately inform SMHA in writing of any player who is unfinancial with their club/team. This advice will be forwarded to Hockey NSW.**

2 ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 **Players are eligible to play in any grade (up to Legends Over 55s) if they are 40 years or older or if they turn 40 before 31st December 2019. In addition players aged 35 to 39 or who turn 35 before 31st December 2019 are eligible to play in the Premier League.**

Players are eligible to play in the Legends Over 55s subdivision if they are either 55 years old by 31st December 2019 or they were registered and played in an Over 55s Legends team in 2018

Any team that abuses this policy will be subjected to penalties (as outlined in Competition Rule 5.4) and they also run the risk of having any offending underage players ruled out for the remainder of the season.

- 2.2 **Player Eligibility for Semi Finals, Preliminary Finals and Grand Finals:
Players must be registered and must have played in a minimum 50% of the games during the regular season. The Board can allow dispensation in the event of special circumstances provided that the team in question formally request in writing with full details such dispensation at least 7 days in advance of the commencement of the finals series. Special circumstances will primarily be associated with an injury (supported by written medical evidence) or “one off” overseas, interstate or intrastate business commitments during the season, that has prevented a player from playing for an extended period.**

3. REGISTRATIONS

3.1 All teams must submit a fully completed Team Nomination and Player Registration Form (refer to special designated form) to the Director Administration before 10th March 2019. Teams not submitting this form on time will not be eligible to earn points in the competition until they have complied. All new players for 2019 who have not previously been registered with Sydney Masters Competitions must provide some form of photo ID with their registration details which proves their date of birth.

3.2 A player can only be registered with one team for a Club and can only play in matches for that Club in the competition along the following lines. Players registered for a “Premier League” team cannot play in any other Division, “Sydney Cup” registered players cannot play in any other lower Divisions, “Masters League” registered players cannot play in any other lower Division. Players registered for the “Legends” can play in any Division (ie higher Division as required).

The only specific exception to this rule is for goal keepers – refer to Section 3.5 below for full details.

A player registered in a “Sydney Cup” Division team may play up to six (6) games in “Premier League” Division after which he will automatically be re-graded to “Premier League” Division status. A player registered in “Masters League” team may play up to six (6) games in total in either “Premier League” or “Sydney Cup” after which he will automatically be re-graded to the team in the Division in which he has played the 6 games or otherwise the team in the next highest Division. A player registered in a “Legends” team may play up to six (6) games in total in either “Premier League, Sydney Cup or Masters League” after which he will automatically be re-graded to the team in the Division in which he has played the 6 games or otherwise the team in the next highest Division

Any requests for re-grading to “Sydney Cup, Masters League or Legends” Division during the season must be made in writing to the Board.

3.3 Teams can submit requests in writing to the Board for registration of additional players or deletion of players (who have not played after initial registration) at any time during the season. A fully completed and updated Team Nomination and Player Registration Form to include any changes required must be provided with any request. Teams specifically need to be aware of the eligibility requirements for finals (Section 2.2) for any late player registrations.

3.4 Goalkeepers: Goalkeepers must wear a different colour playing shirt from all other players.

3.5 In the event of the non-availability of a teams’ registered goalkeeper for any game the process for a temporary (“one off”) substitute / replacement will be:

a) Utilise another Goalkeeper from within own club first

Premier League goalkeepers can play down in Sydney Cup (or Masters League or Legends Division only in the “one off” cases of Briars, Manly and UTS as their No 2 teams are in these respective Divisions) for their own club only

Sydney Cup goalkeepers can play down in Masters League for their own club only

Masters League goalkeepers can play down in Legends for their own club only

b) If it is not possible to use a goalkeeper from your own club in terms of a) above (should be a very rare occasion) or you are a one team Masters club then another team goalkeeper from the same or lower Division can be arranged subject to the agreement of that team's main coordinator. In the case of "Legends" a team can also, if required, arrange a goalkeeper from "Masters League"

3.6 Teams can play with 11 field players (or more than 7 up to 11) at any time during the game. No field player has any goalkeeping privileges

3.7: Team playing Uniform: All teams must register their full playing uniform (shirts, shorts and socks) for the approval of the Board when they first enter for the competition or when the uniform is changed. Upon approval teams must ensure that all players wear the same correct uniforms during all matches throughout the competition.

Where there is any possible conflict of colours between teams, the team which was admitted to the grade the latest will be required to provide an alternate playing uniform. Any teams wishing to change or amend their playing uniforms in any way must first send a formal request in writing to the Board for approval.

3.8 Special registration for Northside, Ryde, Sutherland and Syd Uni, in Legends Division – Over 55s sub division (see clause 5 below)

In addition to all other information required on SMHA Registration Forms, the dates of birth of any player, where their year of birth is after 1964, must be marked with an 'asterisk' to indicate that this player was a fully registered playing member of that team in 2018.

SMHA reserve the right to check the age of any player and will check the 2018 registration of all players born post 1964, who are being registered in Legends O'55s teams for 2019. Once cleared to play in 2019, all players born after 31 Dec 1964 but permitted by SMHA to play, will be allowed to play in this grade.

4. CONDUCT OF GAMES

4.1 All playing venue ground rules are to be observed and abided by at all times by all SMHA players and officials.

4.2 Regular Season Game Playing Conditions - All Divisions: 10 minutes warm up: 2 x 35 min periods: 5 min half time break. There will be no time outs for substitutions or injuries. Penalty strokes and penalty corners will be played out. All games will finish 10 minutes before the designated starting time of the following match. Umpires will adjust the length of the second half to meet this requirement as necessary.

4.3 During all competition matches each team may play up to a maximum of 16 players in each game. FIH rules state that of the eleven players on the pitch at anytime, one MAY be a fully kitted goalkeeper (That is teams can choose to play with eleven outfield players.). Only fully kitted goalkeepers enjoy privileges. In the final series teams can field a maximum of 17 players (15 of which can be field players) on the basis that the SMHA provides a qualified substitute goalkeeper as an additional player specifically to only cover a goal keeper suspension or injury.

- 4.4 Should a goalkeeper receive a temporary suspension of 5 minutes at any time during the game which forces him to leave the field, his team will be required to continue play with 10 field players during the suspension (ie no goalkeeping privileges). If the suspension is of a longer duration (ie more than 5 minute temporary suspension or a RED card) then the team can either play on with 10 players none of whom have goalkeeping privileges or replace the goalkeeper with another fully kitted one and remove one outfield player.
- 4.5 Games should not commence until the match cards have been filled out and handed to the umpires. Delays resulting from a failure to supply cards will be deducted from game time.
- 4.6 Any team that is unable to field a minimum of seven (7) eligible players within 10 minutes of the designated starting time for the game will be deemed to have FORFEITED the match. The opposition team will be awarded a 5-0 win. A match card must be completed and signed off by the umpires as per normal requirements. The team who receives the forfeit will have the game credited to players who are at the game and listed on the team match card. The forfeiting team will not have the game credited to any players. In addition, they will be penalised the full pitch hire fee for that game (Currently \$280.00)
- 4.7 Teams are required to supply one approved match ball – preferably a Standard Kookaburra white dimple for P2 and Standard Kookaburra yellow dimple for Olympic. Arrangements are being made to supply all teams with three yellow balls.
- 4.8 **Semi Finals** : up to 10 min warm up then 2 x 35 min. periods; 5 min. half time break. There will be time out for all suspensions and injuries. If scores are tied at full time, a penalty shootout - 5 players (starting from the 23) v goalkeeper (starting from the goal line) in 10 seconds will take place. If the scores remain tied a “sudden death” competition will take place.
- 4.9 **Preliminary Finals** : up to 10 min warm up then 2 x 35 min. periods; 5 min. half time break. There will be time out for all suspensions and injuries. If scores are tied at full time, a penalty shootout - 5 players (starting from the 23) v goalkeeper (starting from the goal line) in 10 seconds) will take place. If the scores remain tied a “sudden death” competition will take place.
- 4.10 **Grand Final**: up to 10 min warm up then 2 x 35 min. periods; 5 min. half time break. There will be time out for all suspensions and injuries. If scores are tied at full time, a penalty shootout - 5 players (starting from the 23) v goalkeeper (starting from the goal line) in 10 seconds) will take place. If the scores remain tied a “sudden death” competition will take place.
- 4.11 **Lightning Safety Code.**
The following Lightning Safety Code applies to all games conducted by SMHA.
- a) The lightning safety code is based on the 30 / 30 rule which calls for play to be stopped when the lightning / thunder ratio reaches 30 seconds or less. i.e. the time between when the lightning is seen and the thunder is heard is 30 seconds or less. This means that the lightning is 10 km away and the next strike has a “significant risk” of hitting the people who have seen the lightning and heard the thunder.
- b) Play should not commence until 30 minutes after the last lightning strike and thunder or upon the mutual agreement of appointed officials and team captains, relying on local knowledge but at all times ensuring the safety of all concerned.

4.12 `Shin Pad and Mouthguard Competition Safety Rule

In all competition games, training sessions and representative championships etc conducted by or participated in by Sydney Masters Hockey Association (SMHA), all players are recommended to wear shin pads and mouthguards. Any player who cannot or who does not wish to comply with this recommendation in full must complete the Player Agreement Waiver without which he will not be eligible to play

5 CONDUCT OF THE COMPETITION

5.1 Teams will play a series of round matches throughout the season as follows ; -

<u>Premier League</u>	6 teams	15 games	(3 rounds against each opponent
<u>Sydney Cup</u>	7 teams	14 games	(2 Full rounds plus 2 additional games)
<u>Masters League</u>	7 teams	14 games	(2 Full rounds plus 2 additional games)
<u>Legends</u>	8 teams	13 games	(See below)

5.2 Conduct of Legends Division

This division will be nominally split into two subdivisions of 4 teams as follows:

Unlimited age section - Briars, Easts, Macarthur and Northern Districts,

Over 55s Section - Northside, Ryde, Sutherland and Syd Uni

A round robin comprising all teams will be played once only (7 games) whilst teams in each section will play one another a further two times (6 games)

5.3 Points will be awarded as follows: WIN = 3; DRAW = 1; LOSS = 0

5.4 If neither team appears for a scheduled game, no points will be awarded for that game. Note - prior notification to the SMHA Director Administration must have been provided in writing otherwise the Board may impose a fine of up to \$130 per team. “Sharing” of points by agreement is not permitted under any circumstances.

5.5 Any team playing UNREGISTERED, INCORRECTLY REGISTERED or NONAPPROVED UNDERAGE players will forfeit any points won in that game and these will be credited to their opponents together with a 5-0 score. In the event they lose the game, three points will be deducted from their accumulated total. The Board may also apply a fine of up to \$100 for any offence.

5.6 At the conclusion of the round robin series teams will be ranked on the following basis:

1st Rank - Number of Points earned

2nd Rank - Higher Goal difference

3rd Rank - Higher Number of Goals scored

4th Rank - Higher total points earned in games played between any / all teams equal on all of the above

5th Rank - Result of the most recent game between teams equal on all of the above

6th Rank - Result of the second most recent game etc

5.7 **Finals** : At the end of the round robin series of matches there will be a final series of matches played as follows –

“Premier League” – the four teams who have gained the most points will progress to the semifinals. In the event of teams finishing on the same number of points the final positions will be determined in accordance with Section 5.6

Semi-Finals will be played on the basis of 1 v 2 (Major) and 3 v 4 (Minor).

Preliminary Final will be played between the loser of the major semi-final and the winner of the minor semi-final

Grand Final will be played between the winner of the major semi-final and the winner of the preliminary final.

“Sydney Cup” – the four teams who have gained the most points will progress to the semifinals. In the event of teams finishing on the same points the final positions will be determined in accordance with Section 5.6

Semi-Finals will be played on the basis of 1 v 2 (Major) and 3 v 4 (Minor).

Preliminary Final will be played between the loser of the major semi-final and the winner of the minor semi-final

Grand Final will be played between the winner of the major semi-final and the winner of the preliminary final.

“Masters League” - the four teams who have gained the most points will progress to the semifinals. In the event of teams finishing on the same points the final positions will be determined in accordance with Section 5.6

Semi-Finals will be played on the basis of 1 v 2 (Major) and 3 v 4 (Minor).

Preliminary Final will be played between the loser of major semi-final and the winner of the minor semi-final

Grand Final will be played between the winner of the major semi-final and the winner of the preliminary final.

“Legends” – All teams will qualify for the semifinals which will be played in their respective sections ie. there will be two separate finals series, one each for the unlimited age section and for the Over 55s section.

Semi-Finals will be played on the basis of 1 v 2 (Major) and 3 v 4 (Minor).

Preliminary Final will be played between the loser of major semi-final and the winner of the minor semi-final

Grand Final will be played between the winner of the major semi-final and the winner of the preliminary final.

5.8 **Incomplete Games during the Season**

If any scheduled games are not able to be completed in full for any reason (except for Competition Rules 3.2 and 4.6) relating to matters such as fields not accessible, damage to field, weather (includes lightning etc), failure of lights etc then the circumstances must be advised to the Director Administration by each team within 24 hours of the game.

The Board will make every endeavour to arrange for any incomplete game to be re-scheduled to an alternative date during the season.

If it is not possible to re-schedule to another time before the completion of the competition rounds then the competing teams will each be awarded 1 competition point (ie the same amount as for a draw).

6. UMPIRES

- 6.1:** Umpires will be appointed by a representative of the Sydney Masters Hockey Association Board to games in all Divisions.
- 6.2:** Match cards are to be filled out and handed to the umpires prior to each match. It is the Umpires responsibility to ensure that they receive completed match cards prior to commencement of each game and also sign off at the completion. This includes ensuring that any player suspensions are correctly recorded.
- 6.3:** All umpires will wear specified colour shirts when umpiring that do not clash with the playing shirts of participating teams.

7. RESULTS

- 7.1** All teams are responsible for emailing the result of their games (including scanning the completed match card) to the Competition Records/Results Officer at competition@sydneymastershockey.com.au no later than 9.00am three days following the playing of the game
- 7.2** Team Coordinators will receive a supply of match cards prior to the season commencing. Each team will be responsible for returning the original completed match card to the Records Officer not later than the Monday following the game. A special Sydney Masters Hockey Mailbox has been provided behind the entrance to the Olympic Pitch for this purpose at Homebush.
- 7.3** The SMHA Board reserves the right not to allocate points for any game for which a fully completed match card is not received within the time frame required as per 7.2 and to fine teams - in the event of repeated offences (up to \$100 per offence).

Fully completed match cards must include details of competing teams, division, date, final score, goal scorers (if possible), names (eg T. Smith) only of players who actually participated in the game, umpires names and signatures, details of any player suspensions and both teams representative signature to verify details as being fully correct.

8. PLAYER MISCONDUCT, SUSPENSIONS AND DISPUTES

- 8.1** SMHA will fully observe all suspension notices against any player, as it may be advised, from any other hockey association within Australia. Accordingly, any player under any temporary or permanent suspension notice will not be permitted to take part in any SMHA games until such suspension has been fully completed and notice provided in writing by the relevant hockey association.
- 8.2** Players who receive suspensions (temporary – yellow or permanent – red) in any SMHA game (this includes the formal preseason competition) will have this recorded against their name on the match card by the Umpires and verified by the team representative as in 7.3 above.

- 8.3 When a player accumulates three yellow cards (temporary suspensions) during a season (up to and including finals), and upon formal notification from the SMHA Director Administration, they will automatically be suspended for 1 SMHA game – ie from their team’s next game. Following on from this, the same player will automatically be suspended for 1 SMHA game (upon notification from SMHA) for every two (2) subsequent yellow cards (temporary suspensions) they receive.
- 8.4 Should a player receive a RED Card (permanent suspension) in any SMHA game during the season, their incident will be assessed for penalty by the appointed SMHA Judiciary.
- 8.5 Umpires are required to forward a written report to the SMHA Director Administration within 48 hours in the event they issue a Red Card.
- 8.6 **Judiciary:** Any reported misconduct will be adjudicated on by the SMHA Judiciary at its next meeting. In the event that a meeting of this judiciary is not set down within a reasonable period following the date of the misconduct the Sydney Masters Hockey Board retains the power granted in the constitution to form a panel committee to adjudicate on the matter. In this case the composition of the judiciary shall be as laid down by the Constitution.
- 8.7 **Protests, Complaints and Appeals:** Protests, complaints or appeals of any type must be in writing and in the hands of the Director Administration within forty eight hours of the incident(s). A fee of \$250 must be paid at the time of any protest, complaint or appeal. No investigation will commence until this fee has been paid. The fee will be fully refunded if the protest or complaint is successful or if the SMHA Board agrees that the protest, complaint or appeal (if unsuccessful) was not of a frivolous nature.

9. **REPRESENTATIVE GUIDELINES**

- 9.1 **SMHA Representative Eligibility:** Players must be registered (and financial with their team / club) and have participated as a player in the SMHA Competition in the current season to be eligible for selection as a Sydney Masters Hockey Representative. All nominees must be in attendance and play on designated selection and training days (as required).
- 9.2 Players (from time to time and where required) who play Masters hockey for other Associations may be invited for selection in any Sydney representative team subject to the approval of the Board. This generally would happen strictly on a limited basis and mainly relate to senior players in the Over 55’s plus age divisions. Similarly, this situation would apply to players who play grade hockey within Sydney or any other Association for the Over 35 age division.
- 9.3 A player who is suspended at the time of a NSW Championships is ineligible to represent SMHA
- 9.4 A player who is selected for any SMHA representative team who subsequently plays for another Masters Association in the same competition without the written consent of the Board shall be suspended from the SMHA competition for the balance of the season.

10. ANNUAL COMPETITION STRUCTURE

An important objective for the Board of the SMHA is to ensure that all teams in all divisions remain as competitive as possible.

Therefore, prior to the commencement of each season the SMHA Board shall, determine the annual competition structure and the appropriate composition of Divisions including the relevant grading of all teams for the forthcoming competition.

GRADING OF TEAMS

The following methodology, process and considerations will be used by the Board to determine the structure of the annual competition and the composition of teams for each Division.

a) At the conclusion of each season and normally at the AGM, all clubs will be required to nominate the number of teams they intend to enter in the following season competitions and into which Division they wish each team to compete.

Although there can be significant differences between the playing standards of each Division, unless there are extenuating circumstances, teams who finish first after the full round of matches in the previous season (Minor Premiers) will be considered for promotion to the next higher grade and teams finishing last after the full round of matches in the previous season will be considered for relegation to the next lower grade

Promotion and Relegation is not automatic and must be approved by the Board. Provisional gradings for the following season will be assessed using the previous seasons results. The final decision will also take into account the clubs' / teams declared preferences and where there is a mismatch between an allocated grade and a club's preference then that club /team will be informed and invited to prepare a formal submission to the Board.

The Board also reserves the right to consider other teams throughout all Divisions for possible promotion or relegation. This would generally be on the basis of the previous seasons results where it can be clearly demonstrated that any team is clearly superior (ie has performed very strongly in line with the Minor Premiers) or uncompetitive (ie has performed very poorly in line with the team who finishes last) in any Division.

The Board also has the right to review teams in the event a new Division is established and a re-balancing of teams is required based on any change in the structure of the competition – ie overall team numbers may be increased or decreased in any particular Division in any future seasons.

There will not be any provision for two (2) teams from the same Club to be in the same Division unless approved by the Board.

This means that a team from a Club who may be Minor Premiers in a Division cannot be promoted to a higher Division if that Club already has an existing team in that Division. Teams which are relegated to the next lower Division will force an existing team (s) from its own club to cascade down to the next lower Division except in the case of relegation to Legends.

In addition, the grading into a suitable Division for any new Clubs or additional teams from existing clubs will be determined by the Board (upon a formal written submission from the Club or new team – to include but not be restricted to player listing and history of players etc).

New teams will generally be required to commence in the lowest unlimited age Division unless there are exceptional circumstances in which case Board approval can be sought.

The decisions of the Board in relation to the annual competition structure and the grading of all teams into the relevant playing Divisions are final.