

Southern Counties Hockey Association

South AC Championship

1. The Championship

The AC Championship will be run by the South Junior Committee (SJC) of the Southern Counties' Hockey Association (SCHA).

In the SCHA region it is the AC Competition Phase of the Player Pathway.

These rules will be under the control of the SJC and any amendments shall be approved by the SJC.

The competition will be run by the Junior Management Committee (JMC). **If there is no active JMC, the Officers of the Junior Committee (Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, AC Championship Organiser and Schools' Organiser but not the County Representatives).** They will appoint a Championship Co-ordinator (CC) and may delegate any of their powers to the CC, other such persons that they appoint or the SJC as they from time to time decide.

The standard structure of the Championship will be a single division round robin. However, where there are too many teams for this to be run the JMC will annually determine the optimum format for each age group.

2. Entry to the Championship

- a. The CC shall invite all Junior Administrators (JA) at counties affiliated to SCHA to request the number of teams they wish to enter for the forthcoming season.
- b. The CC shall set a deadline for such applications which shall be no earlier than 31 July prior to the following AC season.
- c. Where a County requests to enter more than one AC then:
 1. The JMC will consider each request and will permit those where they think that the additional teams will be competitive and enhance the championship.
 2. At the county's discretion players within the county shall be allocation to a AC of equal strength.
- d. Withdrawal of a AC team after the deadline for entries will be dealt with under point 11 "breaches of the rules".

3. Eligibility of Teams and Players

- a. By entering, each AC is deemed to have consented to and be bound by these rules and will nominate a JA who will be the sole point of contact with the CC.
- b. The championship shall be run at U13, U14, U15, U16 and U17 levels for both boys and girls, the qualification date is 01 January of the year in which the championship is being played.
- c. **Overage players, who are still at school and who are no older than a standard school year 13 (ie up to 16 months overage) may play in the U17 championship provided that:**
 - i. **they are not taking a place away from a genuine U17 who should be there**
 - ii. **they are not a current NAGS player or a NAGS player from the previous season and now**

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too old to be in the NAGS squad

- d. Players may represent only one AC per season:
1. Where a county runs differing numbers of ACs at different age groups the JMC will specify to the county the valid promotion paths.
 2. A player is normally expected to play for the age group for which they were selected; however, where a squad is unable to field 16 players (either 14 outfield and 2 keepers or 15 outfield and 1 keeper):
 - Single AC counties should select replacements to bring them up to these levels either from other squads within their AC or from those who attended the DCs run by that AC or their associated county and not selected for a AC.
 - Multi AC Counties there may be occasions when it is acceptable to also transfer players across, subject to age. This must be agreed in advance by the CC who may need to consult with the teams involved. **Otherwise, they have to follow the procedures for Single AC counties.**
 3. A player only plays for one squad per day
 4. Under this clause goalkeepers and outfielders are treated separately, outfielders are a single entity and unless specifically agreed by the CC all other outfield players must be used before replacements from other squads can be sought irrespective of their normal playing position
- e. Without specific dispensation from the CC a player must play for one of the ACs that are run by the county whose DCs it last attended, in the case of those who have reached PC this will relate to the DC from an earlier season. Counties to advise with the CC where exceptions need to be made so the best interest of the player is fulfilled. i.e. possible house/school moves.
- f. Players currently in the National Age Group Squads (NAGS) are not eligible to play in the AC Championship, players invited to become part of the NAGS Programme part way through become ineligible as soon as they accept their invitation, but can train with the AC if they want.
- g. Players participating at the AASE who are not part of the full NAGS squad may participate in the Championship, though to do so must attend the training as a phase of the AC programme.
- h. **An AC may nominate a squad of up to 18 players for a match day. All 18 are allowed to play in a single match.**
- i. It is recommended that match day squads include at least 2 regular goalkeepers.

4. Fixtures

- a. The dates on which the championship shall be played shall be decided by the SJC.
- b. The order of the fixtures shall be set by the CC and published on a suitable website as selected by the JMC.

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- c. By 31 January each year the JA is responsible for booking pitches for the matches that their AC is hosting and communicating these to the CC in the form that the CC specifies, these will be included on the fixture website.
- d. By 28 February each year, or 14 days before the first match if earlier, the JA shall provide contact details (email and phone) of each of their squads.
- e. Each host JA is responsible for confirming with the JAs from the visiting ACs details of their home matches at least fourteen days before the fixture. At the same time reminding each other of the team colours and ensuring each Team Manager has correct mobile phone contact numbers required for any emergencies on the match day particularly in the case of dubious weather or other travelling issues.

5. Matches and Conditions of Play

- a. All matches shall be played in accordance with the rules of hockey, except as hereafter provided.
- b. The host AC shall be responsible for the provision of an adequate supply of suitable hockey balls for each game.
- c. Each team player shall wear a shirt bearing in the centre of the back in Arabic/English numbers of at least seven inches (18 centimetres) in height and contrasting in colour to the shirt with no two players wearing the same number. Returning substitutes shall wear the same number previously used by them. Bibs with numbers may be used as an alternative.
- d. In the event of a potential clash of colours of shirts and/or socks, unless otherwise agreed, the away named team shall change. Umpires will decide if closely match colours constitute the need for a colour change.
- e. All matches shall be played on acceptable artificial pitches. Floodlights may be used if acceptable to the appointing umpiring Association.
- f. A match may be started at any time between 11:00 and finish but no later than 17:00 (unless otherwise agreed).
- g. The standard length of AC games is 25 minutes each way with 5 minutes at half time. Teams are entitled to 20 minutes before their first game for warm-up and 30 minutes between games for rest/warm-up. Head-to-head games (as opposed to those as part of a triangular) must use the same match length as other games to ensure equality should goal difference be required at the end of the season. Where the CC has used his dispensation to vary the structure of the tournament in rule 1, he may also specify a different match length.
- h. The minimum number of players to start or continue a game shall be eight. If after ten minutes, there is less than eight members then that side shall be considered as unable fulfil the fixture with the appropriate penalty applied.
- i. Players injured or suspended during a game shall count towards the minimum number required to continue a game or start a subsequent game on the same day.

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- j. If a member of a team bench is removed or suspended by an umpire, a playing member of the relevant team must be removed from the pitch for the duration of such suspension or removal
- k. At least 2 adults should be in charge of a team for all matches. All coaches will be expected to have current DBS clearance less than 3 years old.
- l. ACs are strongly advised to ensure all their players wear all appropriate forms of protective gear e.g. shin pads, gum shields, masks etc.
- m. **At most 3 non-players may occupy the team bench, except that where an injured player is being treated by a person other than those nominated to be on the bench, when the number of non-players on the bench may increase for the duration of that treatment. At least one of those on the bench must be over 18.**

6. Umpires

Host JAs must apply to their local Hockey Umpires' Association (HUA) for umpires for the fixtures, host JAs must give visiting JAs at least 10 days' notice if the HUA is unable to appoint. If 10 days' notice is given each team must provide an umpire, if 10 days' notice is not given the hosts must supply all the umpires.

If the HUA withdraws appointed umpires with less than 10 days' notice, then the Host JA must inform their guests within 24 hours. If at least 7 days' is given then the visitors will have to provide an umpire, otherwise the visitors will be given an opportunity to provide an umpire. If they are unable to do so then the hosts will supply sufficient umpires.

The CC may vary the required notice period for re-arranged games where the ten days is excessive in relation to the overall period available to set the game up.

Umpires supplied by ACs should be qualified to at least Level One. **HUAs and RYUAG are allowed to appoint umpires who they are assessing who do not yet have the necessary qualification.**

A player may not umpire matches involving teams that he/she has played or will be playing on that day.

The CC must also be informed of:

- **matches which will not have appointed umpires**
- **matches where appointed umpires have been withdrawn once they have been appointed (but not if the appointing body has been able to replace an appointed umpire)**

This notification is to be at the same time as the visiting teams are notified.

7. Postponement and Abandonment

- a. A JA may request postponement of a fixture due to clashes on the Centralised Calendar if it affects their ability to raise a side. If the CC feels that it is beneficial to play the games

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on the stated day rather than using a slip day he may allow the team some latitude to get a team out beyond the constraints laid down in the rules. In these instances, the strength of the assembled squad must not exceed the expected strength of the squad who would have played had the clash not have existed.

- b. A hosting JA may postpone a match due to the pitch being unfit for play either through adverse weather or short notice events beyond their control. If they so decide they must immediately inform the umpires, the visiting JA and the CC.
- c. Any JA may request the CC to postpone games based on adverse weather making it inadvisable to travel.
- d. A match may only be abandoned once it has started by the unanimous decision of both umpires, the Team managers/coaches of both teams shall be deemed to have transferred their powers in this respect to the umpires jointly. The umpires are requested to advise the Team managers/coaches of the reason for their decision.
- e. Any match postponed or abandoned shall be played on the next designated spare date.
- f. Notwithstanding the CC may make such directions as considered fit as to the outcome of an abandoned match subject to information collated from all parties.

8. Results

- a. Team Managers must confirm the score with the umpires straight after the final whistle and submit them to their JA. The JA must submit the results for all matches hosted by their AC to the CC by **23:00** on the day of the match. This will include matches that they hosted but in which they did not participate.
- b. Results must be communicated in such a way they are time stamped to confirm compliance.
- c. The penalty for failure to report results is a deduction of one point per set of matches (either a head-to-head or triangular) for which one or more results is outstanding.
- d. Results submitted missing either the gender or age group will be treated as un-submitted and may result in penalties.
- e. The CC will ensure that the results submitted by **23:00** are displayed on the JMCs chosen website by **13:00** on the day **after** the matches.

9. Position in League

In formats where a pool or league is used the following procedure will be used to determine the position within the pool or league:

Points

The following points will be awarded per game

- 3 for a win
- 1 for a draw
- 0 for a loss.

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The winner of a pool or league will be the team with the highest number of points.

If teams are equal on points, the tie will be broken using the first one of the methods below that produces a winner:

- 1) The team with the greatest goal difference
- 2) The team who scored the greatest number of goals
- 3) If it is still a tie, then the above will be repeated only taking in to account the matches between the teams who are level.
- 4) Thereafter a tie.

10. Default

If a team fails to fulfil a fixture then, if the CC:

- i. feels that the reason is beyond the team's control (for example too many injuries or excessive travel delays) then if at least 40 minutes of the match have been played, the score at the point the game was abandoned will stand. Otherwise, if the match cannot be rescheduled, the CC will decide what would be fair to the teams concerned taking in to account the reasons why the game was not played.
- ii. feels that the reason is within the team's control (for example poor discipline resulting in suspensions) then further the match will be awarded to the non-offending team 5-0. For repeated breaches of this rule during a season.

For the purposes of this 'the team' consists of the players and any official entitled to be on the team's bench.

11. Breach of Rules

- a. If a team so conducts itself or its administration such that a match cannot be played or completed in accordance with these rules, the Rules of Hockey or of England Hockey, then that team shall suffer a mandatory deduction of three points per affected match and the match shall be played at a later date as directed by the CC. Additional financial penalties will normally be imposed.
- b. If a match is completed but a team is subsequently found to have played an ineligible or suspended player then that team shall suffer a mandatory loss by 5-0 or the actual score if a higher or equal winning goal difference results (with the opposing team deemed to have won the match by the same score). Additional financial penalties will normally be imposed.
- c. In these circumstances and all others, the SJC may impose such additional penalties as are suitable including:
 1. a fine of up to £100
 2. liability for reasonable costs

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3. any fine levied by the HUA for cancellation or non-use of umpires will be passed on
4. loss of points, relegation, suspension or expulsion from the Championship.

12. Protest and Appeals

- a. Protest or appeals may only be made by participating JAs.
- b. Protest or objections to the CC must be lodged within seven days of the relevant match or occurrence or of the time when the circumstances became known to the complainant.
- c. A team may appeal through the Secretary to the JMC against the decision of the CC, within fourteen days of notification of such decision and upon deposit of £100 payable to SCHA which may be returned in whole or in part at the discretion of the appeal committee.
- d. The JMC may refer such appeal to a committee of three persons (nominated by South Management) which shall act with expediency and in its own discretion may hold a written or an oral hearing. The decision of the appeal committee shall be final.

13. Financial

- a. All AC squads shall pay a fee as determined by the JMC. This fee will be invoiced and is due by the end of February or within 21 days of being invoiced if this is later. If not paid, such subscription will increase by £10 per team on 1st day of each subsequent month after the notified date. Any team not having paid by the commencement of the first round matches may have all results nullified.
- b. SCHA shall indemnify its committee members and any person appointed by and acting on behalf of the SJC or SCHA against any claim which may arise from any action taken with the authority of the Championship.

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Notes to ACs

These are issued by the JMC and CC generally to highlight things that they wish particular attention paid to or to indicate the more likely ways in which they expect they will use any discretion available to them.

These notes do not form part of the Rules.

Explanations

1. We want to encourage juniors to umpire – however they may not umpire those players who they have played or are scheduled to play that day.
2. The JMC have selected to use Fixtures Live to publish the fixtures, the intention is to allow ACs to enter their own venues and times, but we are having issues with the games ‘in the middle of the triangle’ and may have to revert to supplying details to the CC or the first named visiting AC for entry.
3. ACs may include a feed from Fixtures Live to display their fixtures and results or the complete table.
4. Matches must be played on the day scheduled unless weather renders the pitch unfit (save for exceptional circumstances or prior application to the CC and approval given).
5. Whilst the JA is the sole official point of contact, in the run up (72 hours) to games especially where there may be issues with the weather the team coach may be included for expediency.

Things to Highlight

1. The CC is Heather Windust and can be contacted on hev.windust@hotmail.co.uk. Results are to be sent to south-jac-results@hotmail.com.
2. Host ACs must report all scores from the matches at their venue, this includes games in which they themselves are not playing.
3. Any postponed/abandoned match must be played on the first designated spare date as agreed by all ACs prior to the competition or as otherwise directed by the CC.
4. Host teams must allow their opponents time to warm up and practice on the surface prior to the starting time.
5. Teams involved in floodlit matches to which recognised umpires would normally be appointed must check in good time whether the appointing HUA will appoint and if not ensure that the games are played in daylight.
6. Teams must abide by any local rules or requirements relating to pitches, particularly in the use of correct footwear and off pitch spectator/officers arrangements.

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7. In 2017-18 the relevant age qualifications are:

age group	born on or after
U13	01 Jan 2005
U14	01 Jan 2004
U15	01 Jan 2003
U16	01 Jan 2002
U17	01 Sep 1999

The Player Pathway recommends that players play in the natural age group but does not prevent them from being selected for an older age group. If they are so selected they must receive the same pitch time opportunity as the remainder of that squad and their onward selection for PC must not be jeopardised.

8. Coach contact information will only be distributed to JAs and other county coaches. ACs may add this information to the team's online record, SCHA will not do so without a specific request from the JA or coach concerned.
9. When submitting results, a single email (or single attachment to an email) is preferred containing all the results for matches that a AC has hosted. If results are submitted individually then please ensure that the age and gender is on the result, there are often 10 games 'a v b' on a given day.

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GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PITCHSIDE CONDUCT

The EH (pitch side) Code of Conduct is to be observed by all Spectators, Managers, Coaches and Players. Team Managers are responsible for ensuring that this occurs.

It is the responsibility of all AC squads to ensure that good manners and courtesy prevail towards the opposition, umpires and other officials before, during and after the game. Once the pitch is available, the match Delegate (if appointed) or Host Team Manager shall assume authority for the pitch and its surrounding area. Counties are advised to ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and that they are aware of local health and safety legislation regarding the pitch and their facilities. CC will advise if a TD is to be appointed.

Team Managers, Umpires and the match delegate (if appointed) will:

a Agree the location of managers, coaches, substitutes and suspended players during their suspension and from where substitutions will take place.

b Satisfy themselves as to the quality and safety of the pitch and its facilities and ensure that other pitch side furniture is removed to the safest location.

c Check the availability and location of an emergency telephone and first aid.

d Agree with the host team officials the location and allowed proximity of spectators.

e Substitutes should warm up in clothing in a colour other than the participating teams in the agreed area of the pitch side.

f Coaches and managers must remain in their designated area. i.e. from half way line to 23m line on one side unless otherwise advised.

g Vocal communication by team officials and players on the bench must not, in any way, be directed at the umpires or players of the opposing team.

h Players not taking part in the game, or those in subsequent or previous matches, must not knock up or cool down on or near the pitch whilst the match is in progress.

i Post-match inquest should be held away from the pitch.

j Spectators should be advised, if necessary, of matters relating to their conduct and particularly in so far as this affects the game in hand.

k Small children should not be allowed to wander freely around the perimeter of the pitch whilst games are in progress. Children should remain under the control of the parent/guardian at all times.

l Babies in push-chairs should not be left parked on the side of the pitch. In accordance with the Southern Counties Hockey Association's Child Protection Policy clubs must provide an area where junior players, when suspended, can be supervised. (*"Young players must not be left alone on the side-line without guidance or supervision, and they must wear adequate clothing in accordance with the weather conditions."*)

n Suspended players must not be allowed to go behind the back-line or goal.

o Captains, coaches and managers should be responsible for their own conduct and the conduct of their players at all times.

Contraventions of the Guidance Notes of Pitch Side Conduct should be included in any report.

Umpires should advise County Officials of any abuse of these Guidance Notes.