



2022-2023 Nova Scotia U16 AAA Hockey League NSU16AAAHL - Operations Handbook

1.0 Introduction

The handbook has been developed to provide guidelines and direction for the operation of the Nova Scotia U16 Hockey League (NSU16AAAHL). The policies stated herein are for NSU16AAAHL operational use in conjunction with rules and regulations of Hockey Nova Scotia and Hockey Canada, and more specifically under the jurisdiction of Hockey Nova Scotia, as per HNS Minor Council Regulations as well as Hockey Canada rules and regulations as applicable to minor hockey.

2.0 Objectives of NSU16AAAHL:

- To provide a high caliber of play for skilled 15/16-year-old - U16 age players in all areas of Nova Scotia
- To provide a competitive level of hockey under minor hockey rules that provides for an emphasis on education, skill development and sportsmanship.
- To encourage players to stay within Nova Scotia by providing a viable competition alternative
- To enable skilled players to compete against players of similar level, while limiting the impact on family and travel to players.

3.0 Structure:

The NSU16AAAHL will consist of ten (10) regionalized teams located in the following regions or as otherwise prescribed by Hockey Nova Scotia.

Region 1: Dartmouth MHA, Cole Harbour Bel Ayr MHA, Eastern Shore MHA

Region 2: Sackville MHA, East Hants MHA

Region 3: Bedford MHA, Halifax MHA

Region 4: TASA MHA, Chebucto MHA, Chester MHA, South Shore MHA

Region 5: Acadia MHA, West Hants MHA, Western Valley MHA, Yarmouth MHA, Clare-Digby MHA, Shelburne, MHA

Region 6: Colchester County, MHA, Cumberland County MHA, Truro MHA, Tatamagouche MHA, Parrsboro MHA, South Colchester MHA and West Colchester MHA. Pictou MHA

Region 7: Cape Breton West, Antigonish MHA, Straight Richmond and Canso Minor Hockey Associations.

Region 8: Industrial Cape Breton, Cape Breton County
Region 9: Moncton South East/Kent HNB Region 5
Region 10: Saint John/Fundy HNB Region 4

3.1 Player Eligibility:

The Nova Scotia U16 AAA hockey league is designed primarily for the 15-year-old first year U18 hockey player. To ensure competitive balance and to foster the development aspect of the league, the following are the rules regarding player eligibility:

The League is open to All players:

- **Who are 15 years of age prior to December 31 of the current playing year AND**
- **All players who turn 16 years of age between the months of September and December of the current playing year. (aka Bad birthdays)**

In addition, each team may sign up to a maximum of FOUR (4) skaters and one (1) goalie who are 16 years old between January and August of the current playing year. (aka Over Agers)

Over agers are intended to complete a roster if not enough players are available within the 15 year old or Bad Birthday categories.

4.0 Competition

4.1 League Schedule:

A league schedule will be approved by the Executive Committee on an annual basis ensuring all teams play in an active schedule commencing in mid/late September and concluding in March/early April, consisting of 30 to 36 games subject to the following:

Teams will play a schedule with primarily all games played on weekends (Saturday afternoons/evenings and Sunday mornings/afternoons). Exception for weekday games and Sunday evening games, if requested, will be granted for interlocking games between teams located in Regions 1,2,3,4,5,6. Regions 7 & 8, along with Regions 9, 10. Weekday and Sunday evening games must not commence before 7:00 p.m. and must be completed by 10:00 p.m. There may be times when flexibility will have to be applied for the benefit of the League.

Games played on Saturdays must not commence prior to 4:00 pm, with the exception of interlocking games between teams in Regions 1,2,3,4, and in any event, must be completed no later than 10:00 p.m. Games played on Sundays must not commence prior to 11:00 am and must be completed at a time to allow the visiting team to return to their home arena by 7:00 pm, with the exception of interlocking games as above, which must be completed by 10:00 pm.

Changes to scheduled games must be approved by the NSU16AAHL President or league scheduler. Prior to requesting approval for a change in scheduled games the team requesting the change is to obtain approval from the opposing team. It is expected both teams will act in

good faith in attempting to reschedule. In the event of a conflict, the Executive Committee of the NSU16AAHL will rule, and its decision will be final.

All scheduled games must be completed, and under NO circumstances will games be forfeited.

All teams are to provide the League Scheduler, with available dates for home games by June 15th. The League Scheduler will provide a draft of the proposed schedule by July 31st for review and adjustment, with final schedule concluded by August 15th.

4.2 Game Structure

Each league game will consist of:

- Three stop time periods with periods 1 and 2 consisting of 15 minutes and the 3rd period consisting of 20 minutes.
- A 10-minute warm-up is to be provided prior to the start of each game and it will be permissible to start the warm-up on “dirty ice”.
- At the one-minute mark of warm-ups, the buzzer will be sounded to signify to teams to pick up all pucks and to be ready to exit the ice at the 0.00 mark when the buzzer sounds.
- The ice is to be re-surfaced prior to the commencement of the 1st period and between the 2nd and 3rd period, allowing for a 10-minute intermission.
- In the event of a tie, there will be a 2-minute rest, teams will not switch ends and then will play a 5-minute sudden death 3 on 3 over time. Following this, if necessary, the teams will go into a 3 player shoot out followed by a sudden death shoot out with no player being allowed to shoot twice until all players have shot. If, however unforeseen circumstances were to take place and the overtime and shoot out could not occur, the game will stand as a tie.
- Each team is permitted one 30-second time out
- Game time slots are to be a minimum of two hours in length and all games must be fully completed. “Buzzing Off” will not be permitted.

Should, under unforeseen circumstances that would cause a game to be stopped prior to the end of the third period, the following guidelines would apply:

- a) If there are 10 minutes or less remaining in the third period when the game is stopped, the score at the stoppage of time will count as the final score.
- b) Should there be more than 10 minutes remaining, a new date will be set for the completion of the game. Play will resume from the point in time at which the game was stopped.
- c) Arrangements for the completion of the halted game are subject to approval of the League Executive.

4.3 Game Day Protocol: (Includes Tournaments)

4.3.1 Home Team:

- To provide visiting team with a minimum of 25 pucks for use in warm-up
- To ensure there are enough game pucks
- To arrange for 2 off-ice officials: one to operate clock, music and public announcements and one to act as scorekeeper. The home team is to ensure the scorekeeper is familiar with governing rules of hockey.
- To arrange for visiting dressing room to be available for use 45 minutes prior to warm-up.
- To pay on-ice officials the going rate per game as prescribed by HNS immediately following each game.
- To ensure the game sheet is properly completed and forwarded to the NSU16AAAHL VP Operations and Statistician immediately following each game.
- To scan and send game sheet to the NSU16AAAHL Statistician within one hour after the conclusion of the game with the score.
- To provide music, limited to during stoppages of play
- To ensure O' Canada is played prior to the start of each game. Starting line-ups for each team to be on the ice.
- To wear darker home jerseys

4.3.2 Visiting Team:

- To arrive at the arena a minimum of 45 minutes prior to commencement of warm-ups
- To wear lighter away jerseys
- Bus Transportation is Team Choice

4.3.3 Both Teams:

At the conclusion of each game, unless otherwise directed by the referee, all players and coaches are to shake hands (gloves off)

4.4 Game Day Cancellations:

In the event, due to poor travel conditions, which at the discretion of the traveling team, prevents the team from safely traveling to the home team arena, the visiting team is to immediately contact, by phone, the following to advise they are unable to travel:

NSU16AAAHL President AND league scheduler
HNS referee liaison (via League Scheduler)
The home team Contact Representative.

All reasonable efforts are to be made to reschedule cancelled games. Should participating teams be unable to reschedule the game(s), the NSU16AAAHL Executive will reschedule the game on pre-determined dates, set aside within the schedule for make-up games.

4.5 On-Ice Officials:

All on-ice officials for regular season play off and provincial championship will be arranged by the NSU16AAAHL Executive in conjunction with HNS referee liaison.

The cost of on-ice officials is the responsibility of the Home team for regular season and league play-off games and will be the responsibility of the Host team/committee for Provincial Championship play.

The NSU16AAAHL will operate under a 4-man officiating system as required by HNS Regulation 26.6.

4.6 Admission:

The cost of admission for each regular season and play-off game is \$5.00 per person over the age of 16.

4.7 Game Passes:

The NSU16AAAHL will provide 6 season passes to be used by team executive members for admission to regular season and play off games. Executive members of the NSU16AAAHL will also be provided season passes.

5.0 Team Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of each team to provide, as a minimum:

5.1 Team Uniforms to include:

- 2 sets of sweaters – home and away
- matching socks
- gloves
- Pants or shells
- CSA Approved Helmets – black or matching team colors

A minimum of 2 – 1.5-hour practices per week. As an alternative, is 3 – 1-hour practices per week will be acceptable. (Exception to the number of practices will be considered for those teams whose Regions involve travel times from home to arena in excess of one hour for some of its players.

5.2 Player Uniform Protocol:

- The League is to approve team colors.
- Teams will comply with Hockey Nova Scotia requirements to have the “STOP” patch properly affixed to each sweater, including game uniforms and practice jerseys.
- Sponsor bars and/or logos are to be placed in such a position as to appropriately display the sponsor’s name, however, not to interfere with team name, name bars, numbers and league patches.

- League patches are to be worn by all teams and must be placed on right chest area at a height equally opposite the “C” or “A” on the left side.
- Sweaters are not to be tucked in.
- Pant legs must be zippered or sewn closed. Open or ripped pant legs are not permitted.
- Helmets must be either black or comply with team colours.
- “Third” colour jerseys **MUST BE APPROVED** by league executive prior to ordering and comply with other jersey regulations.

6.0 Event Permits:

To ensure HNS/HC Insurance coverage is in effect, all events teams participate in must be sanctioned by the League and HNS. Permits are secured as follows:

- 6.1 **Regular Season Games** – granted based on approval of regular season schedule as submitted by the League Executive to HNS.
- 6.2 **Play-off Games** – granted based on approval of schedule submitted by the League Executive to HNS.
- 6.3 **Exhibition Games** – teams are required to submit a request to the League Executive for all exhibition games to include date and time of games, arena, and visiting team. The League Executive will submit a request to HNS to issue a permit.
- 6.4 **Spring ID Camps** – teams are required to submit a request to the League Executive detailing dates, times and locations for all activities involved in Spring ID Camps. For all non ice-related activities, details of the activity are required.
- 6.5 **Tryouts** – teams are required to submit a request to the League Executive detailing dates, times and locations for all activities involved in tryouts. For all non ice-related activities, details of the activity are required.

Please note permit requests for any event between May 31st and August 14th and December 24, 25, 26, 27, 31 and January 1, will not be considered.

7.0 Discipline:

The league operates under the Hockey Nova Scotia Code of Discipline as applicable to minor hockey. ***Refer to latest edition of HNS Code of discipline for details.***

8.0 Player Selection Process:

8.1 Spring Evaluation Camps:

Teams are permitted to conduct evaluation camps from the period not to commence 14 days after the Atlantic Championships for Bantam and must be completed by May 31st.

The following conditions apply to Spring Evaluation Camps.

- Only players who reside within a team’s Region may attend that team’s camp.

- All players who participate in the camp must be listed on the official camp roster which is to be submitted to the League Registrar for approval prior to the team commencing any Spring Evaluation camp activities.

- Players who do not participate in their regional team's spring camp or fall tryouts for personal reasons are not eligible to participate in other teams' tryouts. Players who fail to participate in either their regional team's spring and or fall camps and are NOT duly released by that team render themselves ineligible to participate on any other league team. In addition, players who are offered a roster position with their regional team and who refuse to accept are also ruled ineligible to participate on any other league team.

8.2 Team Tryouts: Fall Camps

Teams are permitted to hold tryouts commencing no earlier than August 23rd and concluding no later than September 15th of each season as per the following.

Players that are released from tryouts by a team are to be provided with an official player release immediately upon being notified. The team shall also forward a copy of the release to the League Registrar immediately and the League Registrar shall inform all member teams of the player release in as soon as possible.

Teams are not permitted to recruit players held by another team until the player has been officially released as notified by the League Registrar. Contacting players in advance to discuss the possibility of a player attending another tryout without first being presented a release from the player's Regional team shall be considered tampering, and the offending team will be fined.

Released players may tryout for any other league team with no limitation on how many other teams they may tryout for however are only permitted to tryout for one team at a time.

Any player residing outside a team's Regional boundary who has been released must present a copy of the official release form as provided by their regional team before the player can participate in any tryout activity. All teams are to ensure that any player has been formally released prior to allowing the player to participate in their team tryouts.

A core roster of 15 skaters and 1 goaltender is to be submitted to the League Registrar by September 13th. For players not signed or not on the team protected list by September 17th, should the player request a release, it must be provided immediately, or the player must be signed.

Tryouts are to be concluded no later than September 17th and final rosters are to be submitted to the league registrar not later than October 17th.

Teams are limited to a maximum of 6 exhibition games after September 1st.

AP's as per Hockey Canada rulings.

35.a) A player of a team of a lower Division or category of the same club, or of an affiliated team, or specially affiliated player, may affiliate to a team or teams of higher Divisions and categories at any time, to a maximum of ten (10) games. However, if the player's registered team completes its regular season and playoffs before the player's affiliated team or teams, the player

may thereafter affiliate an unlimited number of times. For goaltenders, exceptions see Regulations B.42, E36(b).

Exhibition and or/ tournament games which are not part of the regular league games or play-off games, are excluded from the number of games referred to in Regulation E35a

There will be no affiliation between NSU16AAAHL and High School players.

8.3 Player Release Policy:

It is the expectation of the NSU16AAAHL that once a player is signed, that player will be with the team for the balance of the year, and only under "exceptional circumstances" would a player be released after being signed. Approval of the League President is required, prior to a release being granted once the player has been signed.

"Exceptional circumstances" means circumstances in which a player

(a) is sick or injured; or

(b) Moves out of the province and is unable to return to play for the remainder of the season.

Release

1. A release of a player in exceptional circumstances must be obtained prior to November 30th of the current season.

Roster replacement of released player

2. (1) A player signing to replace a player released under exceptional circumstances must have been registered in the tryout process for the team or come from the affiliated players' list for the team.

(2) Players who did not participate in their regional team's tryouts are not eligible to sign.

Not a free agent

3. A released player is not a free agent.

After December 15th a player cannot be released without the approval of the League President as well as approval from the HNS Chair of Minor Council.

All teams will be permitted 20 player cards to fill. Should for any reason, a player leaves a team for any reason other than "exceptional circumstances", no additional player cards will be extended to a team, therefore reducing their core roster for the remainder of the year.

Should a player leave for any reason, teams can use a combination of rostered & A.P. players up to a max of 20. They cannot however utilize more players than were registered with the team on October 3rd.

9.0 Awards:

To recognize the accomplishments of teams and players, the following awards will be presented by the League during the U16 AAA Provincial Tournament.

Team – League Championship Trophy and Banner presented to the team finishing first overall during the regular schedule (the trophy to be returned to the League by December 31st of the following year).

9.1 Player Awards

- Leading Scorer Regular Season (goals & assists)
- Top Goaltender Regular Season
- Top Forward Regular Season
- Top Defenseman Regular Season
- MVP Playoffs/Provincials

9.2 All Star Awards – First Team all star awards will be presented to include the position of 1 goaltender, 2 defensemen and 3 forwards.

9.3 Guidelines for Nominations

Each team coach will nominate the player(s) for each of the awards on the prescribed league form. Coaches may nominate players from their team or another team.

Nominations will be forwarded to the League President or designate immediately upon completion of the regular season or at some other date as may be determined.

All nominations will be compiled on a ballot and ballots will be forwarded to each team for voting. For each award, coaches are to name their first, second and third choices. Each award vote must have the three selections and coaches must vote for players from any team other than their own.

All ballots will be forwarded to the League President by February 28. All awards will be presented during the U16 Provincial Championship. Exception – MVP Playoffs will be awarded at the end of the U16 Provincial Championships.

10.0 Certification Requirements:

It is the requirement of teams to ensure all team personnel are compliant with Hockey Nova Scotia Regulation 11 – Hockey Nova Scotia Certification Requirements with the following amendments:

All coaches, including assistants, trainers, and managers, shall have completed the Speak Out or Respect in Sport course by October 31st.

All Coaches, including assistants, must be trained at the NCCP Development Level 1 Clinic (Minimum)

11.0 Coach Selection:

Coach selection will be administered by the league clubs; however, all coaches must be approved by the league Executive Committee and Certified under HNS/Hockey Canada Rules and Regulations.

12.0 Play-Offs

Round One of Playoffs will involve all 10 teams. Three out of Five playoff Series will be held based upon Regular Season Standings. Teams in Nova Scotia will play each other in Rounds 1 thru 3 to determine a Nova Scotia Provincial Champion.

Each series will alternate locations (2-2-1) with higher seeded team to host the first two “home” games.

1st seed playing 8th seed

2nd seed plays 7th seed

3rd seed plays 6th seed

4th seed plays 5th seed

Teams in New Brunswick will face each other in a Four out of Seven Series to determine a New Brunswick Champion.

The Nova Scotia Champion will face the New Brunswick Champion to determine an Inter-Provincial or Maritime Champion.

Each series will alternate locations (2-2-1-1-1) with higher seeded team to host the first two “home” games.

The Nova Scotia Champion will face the New Brunswick Champion to determine an Inter-Provincial or Maritime Champion.

12.1 Regular Season Tie Breaking Formula:

If two or more teams are tied in total points, seeding for purposes of establishing play off berths will be determined by:

12.1.1 The team with the highest number of wins during the regular schedule

12.1.2 The record of the teams in games against each other (Total Points)

12.1.3 If still tied, the higher standing will be determined based on the ratio of goals for divided by goals against to three decimal places. In calculating this ratio only the records of the teams against each other will be considered. The higher ratio will be given the higher standing.

12.1.4 If still tied, the goal spread in games between the tied teams only. (Goals for minus goals against)

12.1.5 If still tied, the team scoring the most goals in games against each other will finish higher.

- 12.1.6 If still tied, repeat steps 2 to 4 but include the record of all teams in the League.
- 12.1.7 If still tied, a single game will be played to determine the highest placed team, at a site to be determined by the NSU16AAAHL Executive, with each team sharing the cost or surplus revenue, whichever is applicable

13.0 Provincial Championships:

See Section 12.0 Play-Offs above.

14.0 League Governance:

The League shall be administered by an Executive Committee elected by the League membership and approved by Hockey Nova Scotia. The Executive Committee is to consist of:

HNS Chair Elite Hockey
President
Vice President
Vice President
Secretary/Treasurer
Registrar/Statistician/Scheduler

- 14.1 League Meetings:** At an annual meeting, to be held by early May of each year, the Executive Committee will set a schedule for a minimum of quarterly meetings to be attended by members of the Executive Committee and Presidents of each of the League teams for the purpose of conducting the business of the League.

The league will hold regularly scheduled meetings (dates to be determined). Attempts will be made to try to coincide with league tournaments where and when possible to minimize travel.

Attendance at the meetings is mandatory for each team President or designate.

Teams not attending or have representation at League Meetings will incur a League Penalty/Fine of \$100

14.2 Financial:

- 14.2.1 League Administration Fee:** An annual fee will be assessed to each team and be payable by August 31st. The fee will be set by the Executive Committee in an amount to offset the operational costs of the League. Each team will be assessed a 1/10th share of the overall cost to operate the League.

Should a team be in default of payment of League fees the team will be considered to not be in good standing and therefore lose its privilege to vote at League meetings, and may at the discretion of the League Executive, be ineligible to receive event permits.

14.2.2 Annual Budget: The President and Treasurer will be responsible to prepare an annual operating budget for each fiscal year for the period from June 1st to May 31st. The budget is to be presented at the annual meeting, at which time approval of the membership will be requested.

Should over the course of the operating year, a projected shortfall occurs in the overall operating budget, the Treasurer will provide an explanation of the overage and request approval to increase league fees in an amount satisfactory to offset the shortfall. Each team will be required to pay its 1/10th share of the overage within 14 days of being requested.

14.2.3 Accounting: The President and Treasurer shall be responsible to maintain adequate financial accounting and present financial statements at each quarterly meeting.

14.2.4 Banking: The Executive Committee shall be authorized to open a bank account for the purpose of making deposits and writing cheques as required for the operation of the League. Executive Committee members will be authorized as signatory with a minimum of two of the following signatures required for each cheque.

President
Vice President
Treasurer

14.2.5 Expenses: Expenses incurred for the approved official business of the league will be covered by reimbursement of the expense through League Expense claims, submitted to the League President for approval, with appropriate receipts.

Meal Allowance: While traveling on League business, an allowance for meals will be paid as follows:

Breakfast	\$12.00
Lunch	\$12.00
Supper	\$20.00

Mileage: Will be reimbursed at a rate of \$.50 per kilometers

14.2.6 Communication Allowance: No monthly allowance will be paid to Executive Committee members to offset normal costs associated with long distance charges, fax charges, internet charges, etc. Receipts for these expenses if they require excessive usage may be reimbursed if deemed appropriate by a majority of League members.

14.2.7 Administrative Costs: To include such items as postage, stationary, courier costs, etc., will be reimbursed. Receipts are required. Submission of expense reports is required within 60 days of the expense being incurred.