BIHA Inline Rulebook Addendum

Season 2026-2027 – v1.2 – 2026-10-24

This addendum contains additions, alterations, deletions and clarifications of several rules listed in the official WorldSkate inline rulebook. Available on the BIHA website. This addendum will be updated throughout the year when deemed necessary.

Although the rulebook is available in English, some translations can be found online, but only the **English version** will be used for issuing rulings, settling disputes, etc.

The addendum consist of 2 parts, the general rulebook and rules specific to U8-10 & U12.

This version is updated in accordance with the decisions of the Technical Commission of 6 June 2026 and with amendment AM-2026-004 of 23 October 2026.

Competition matters (season calendar, game formats per league, rosters, Cup, postponements, transfers, loans, coops and dispensations) are governed by the BIHA Competition Rules. The text resulting from amendment AM-2026-004 is highlighted. All changes are listed in the change log at the end of this document.

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General rulebook

Terminology

Inline Hockey Technical Commission (IHTC)

In this case the BIHA is the IHTC. You can contact them through office@rollerhockey.be. Game reports have to be send to office@rollerhockey.be.

Team organization

The minimum team size is adjusted to 6 players and 1 goalkeeper.

Referee

The lead referee shall be determined based through the following rules:

1. The highest level on the field is the lead referee. (Levels 1-5, 5 is the highest level)
2. Mutual agreement (& common sense, choose the one with the most experience)
3. First one listed on the sheet.

Glossary

Appropriate authorities

The same as for the IHTC, see above.

1. General game regulations

1.1 Eligibility of teams and players

Age groups are determined by year of birth. A player belongs to the UXX age group if he is (XX − 1) years old or younger on 31 December of the year in which the season starts (e.g. U16: 15 or younger; U20: 19 or younger; U23: 22 or younger). A player keeps the same age group for the whole season.

The minimum age for senior players is set in the BIHA Competition Rules.

1.2 Game time and time outs

Game duration, breaks between periods and time-outs are set out for each league in the BIHA Competition Rules. Time-outs are not allowed during overtime.

1.3 Tied games

Whether a game may end in a tie or is decided by overtime and penalty shots is set out for each league in the BIHA Competition Rules.

> *If the result is still tied after three shooters by each team the procedure shall continue with a tiebreak shoot-out by one player of each team. At this point in the shootout, any player is eligible to take a shot, even if they participated in the original 3 player shootout.*

Penalties do not expire at the end of the overtime period. Players still in the penalty box at the end of overtime, are never eligible to take a penalty shot!

3. Teams

3.1 Team line-up

3.1.1 Players

As mentioned before the minimum number of players is reduced to 6 players and 1 goalkeeper.

G) For a player to be eligible to participate, (s)he must be listed on the team roster, be present and wearing their equipment before the end of the first period. Players who arrive after the end of the first period will not be eligible to play, whether they are listed on the team roster or not.

The referee will report any of these cases to BIHA.

3.1.3 Ineligible Player

G) In all BIHA competitions, a player (including goalkeepers) may be listed in a team line-up only once both of the following conditions are met:

1. the player's licence for the current season has been validated by BIHA; and
2. the full amount of the fee covering that licence has been received by BIHA.

A player who does not meet both conditions at the scheduled start time of the game is an ineligible player within the meaning of this rule. A licence that is pending, awaiting validation or awaiting payment does not confer eligibility.

H) It is the responsibility of each club to ensure that every player listed on the game sheet meets the conditions set out in paragraph G. The fact that a player was allowed to take part in the game by the officials does not make that player eligible.

F) All cases regarding an ineligible player will be reported to the proper authorities (the IHTC for international competitions; the BIHA board for national competitions). Where BIHA notices, or is notified of, an ineligible player during or after a game, the BIHA board shall rule on the matter, including on the sporting and financial consequences for the team concerned.

3.2 Player equipment

Uniforms

All players of a team must wear a uniform kit, at least in DIV1 and in Cup games.

- Helmets: until the end of the 2027-2028 season, differences in shade are tolerated, provided the helmets are of the same colour and the shades remain close. From the 2028-2029 season onward, no tolerance applies.
- Coop teams: all players must wear the same jersey; pants and helmets may differ.

Teams that are not coop teams remain subject to the standard rules.

3.2.4 Protective Equipment

D) Full-face protection is required for everyone younger than U20 or is part of the U20 age group. Keep in mind the following:

- Age groups are not the same as the leagues. E.g. U20 player playing in Div2 is still required to wear full-face protection.
- A player keeps the same age group for the whole season, even if he has a birthday during the season. A U20 player therefore remains required to wear full-face protection until the end of the season.

It is clearly stated in the rulebook but once again: playing without a visor or cage is not allowed anymore, no matter your age or gender.

Shoulder pads are no longer allowed in any of the age groups.

Everyone is allowed, but not required, to wear chest protection. The chest protection needs to meet the following criteria:

- The chest protector needs to be made out of a soft material. Hard materials are not allowed!
- The chest protector needs to be Inline Hockey equipment as stated in rule 3.2.1.
- The chest protector needs to be unmodified. E.g. cutting of the hard parts is not allowed!



Wearing a padded shirt that meets the criteria above is strongly recommended for all players, in particular in the youth categories. It cannot be made mandatory, as WorldSkate does not require it.

3.2.5 Goalkeeper's Equipment

Fly additions (plastic balls) are allowed if they are build into the goalie pads. They cannot be an addition to the pads. Note: fly additions are allowed as long as there are no further restrictions made by the rink!

3.2.12 Puck

A) The puck may be black or red, depending on the color that is available. If both colors are available the referee can decide which color will be used.

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4. Game officials

4.3 Official scorer

The signing procedures of the ESheet remain the same as before at the end of the game both referees and supervisor (if applicable) must sign the sheet.

5. Game progress

5.1 Pre-game procedures

Paragraph C does not apply. Once the coach has signed the sheet, no more changes can be applied to the roster. This remains as it was in previous seasons.

5.5 General Game Rules

5.5.4 Change of Players

B) Players may be substituted at any time from the player benches, provided that the player or players leaving the surface shall be within **1,5m (5')** of their player's bench before any change is made.

D) When a goalkeeper leaves the goal area and proceeds to the player's bench for substitution, this must be done within **1,5m (5')** of the bench area before the substitute may enter the game.

5.5.9 Puck Out of Bounds or Unplayable

> *D) If the puck comes to rest on top of the boards surrounding the playing area it shall be considered to be in play and may be played legally by hand or stick.*

If the puck comes to rest on any surface attached to the boarding, but behind it, the puck is considered out of bounds. If the puck is on top the boards the players may use their hands to push the puck back onto the field. Since the boards are high at some rinks, the use of sticks is strongly discouraged since that might result in High Sticking calls.

6. Penalties

Game Ejections are considered the same as a Game Misconduct penalty throughout the entire rulebook.

Gross Misconduct are considered the same as a Match Penalty throughout the entire rulebook.

6.1 Penalty Definition

6.1.2 Minor Penalties

> *C) The penalized player who has been replaced on the penalty bench shall not be eligible to play until that penalty has expired.*

The penalized player who has been replaced on the penalty bench shall not be eligible to play until that penalty has expired and the player replacing him/her has been allowed to reenter the field and participate in the game. Just the expiring of the penalty time is not enough.

6.1.5 Game Misconduct Penalties

C) For all Game Misconduct penalties regardless of when imposed, a total of 20 minutes shall be charged in the records against the offending players

6.1.6 Match Penalties

C) For all match penalties, regardless of when imposed, 24 minutes shall be charged in the records against the offending player.

6.1.7 Additional Penalties

> *A) On the third (3rd) **minor** penalty assessed to any one player or goalkeeper, in the same game that player or goalkeeper will be assessed an additional ten (10) minute misconduct penalty. (Minor Penalties or Coincidental Penalties this also includes a delayed minor penalty that is washed out by the scoring of a goal.)*
>
> *C) Any player incurring three (3) stick penalties within a single game will be also assessed a penalty appropriate to the last infraction and be assessed a Game Ejection Penalty. A substitute must serve any penalty time that the ejected player was assessed. Stick infractions are: slashing, high sticking, crosschecking, butt ending and spearing. A Double Minor penalty shall count as one (1) stick penalty for this ruling.*

To simplify things we are going to count penalties the same way for A) and C), with the exception for C) that only stick penalties will be counted.

- Double minor
  - A double minor = two minors for the same infraction at the same, **counts as one penalty**.
    E.g. Minor + Minor for Spearing
  - Two separate minors still **count as two penalties**.
    E.g. Minor for High Sticking and Minor for Roughing
    E.g. Minor for High Sticking and a few minutes later another Minor for High Sticking
- Minor + Misconduct
  - Counts as 1 penalty since only minor penalties will be counted.
    E.g. Minor high sticking + misconduct for abuse of officials.
- A penalty shot is also a penalty, so it also counts as one penalty for the penalized player, whether a goal was scored or not.

The additional misconduct shall be noted on the game sheet as Unsportsmanlike conduct.

E) When any player or goalkeeper receives a second major penalty in the same game that player or goalkeeper shall also be assessed an additional game Misconduct penalty.

6.4 Implementation of Penalties

Extra information regarding the notation of penalties on the game sheet can be found in the appendices A & B.

6.4.3 Illegal Equipment

> *E) … If any other goalkeepers' equipment shall come off during the play the Referee shall allow the play to continue.*

As a safety precaution play shall be stopped in the leagues U16 and below if the goalkeeper loses any protective equipment. A stick is not considered protective equipment. A minor penalty shall be assessed to the offending goalkeeper if the referee determines that the goalkeeper deliberately took the equipment off to stop the play.

G) If a player loses a glove during play, (s)he has options:

1. Go back to their players bench and change, without actively participating in the game on the way over there.
2. Pick up the glove and put it back on, only then is (s)he allowed to continue actively participating in the game.

On the first infraction a warning will be given. On subsequent infractions a minor penalty for illegal equipment will be assessed by the referee.

6.4.19 Fighting

B) A player who starts a fight will be assessed a match penalty.

D) If a fight involves one player or more players that are off the playing surface, both players will be assessed a game misconduct penalty or a match penalty.

E) A game misconduct penalty shall be imposed on any player or goalkeeper on the floor who first intervenes in an altercation then in progress.

NOTE: To apply 6.4.19 E one player must be assessed a match penalty.

6.4.36 Checking to the head or neck

There is no such thing as a clean check to the head. A player who directs a hit of any sort, with any part of his body or equipment, to the head or neck of an opposing player or drives or forces the head of an opposing player into the protective glass or boards. This rule supersedes all similar actions regarding hits to the head and neck except those related to fighting.

1. A player who directs a hit to the head or neck of an opponent will be assessed either a major and game misconduct penalty or a match penalty
2. A penalty for checking to the head or neck will be assessed if one of the following occurs when a player checks an opponent:
    - The player directs a hit with any part of his body or equipment to the head or neck of an opponent;
    - The player drives or forces the head of an opponent into the protective glass or boards by using any part of his upper body;
    - The player extends and directs any part of his upper body to make contact with the head or neck of an opponent;
    - The player extends his body upward or outward in order to reach his opponent or uses any part of the upper body to make contact with an opponent’s head or neck;
    - The player jumps (leaves his skates) to deliver a blow to the head or neck of an opponent.

3. If a skater skates with his head up, is in possession of the puck, and is expecting a hit coming, an opponent does not have the right to hit him in the head or neck.
4. If the primary force of a blow is initially to the body area and then contact slides up to the head or neck area, a penalty for checking to the head or neck will not be assessed.

6.4.37 Head-butting

A player who either attempts to head-butt or succeeds in head-butting an opponent will be assessed a match penalty.

7. Discipline

This section does not apply. The internal BIHA rules will be used.

Suspensions – players active in several categories

AM-2026-004 – adopted by the BIHA board, in force since 23/10/2026, to be ratified by the next Technical Commission

a) Category of origin: the category of the game in which the suspension was imposed. Other categories: every other category in which the player is eligible when the suspension is imposed (rookie, overclassing derogation, U20, senior divisions…).

b) Until the suspension has been fully served in the category of origin, the player may not play in that category, and may play in another category only under the conditions of paragraph c).

c) The player becomes eligible again in another category after sitting out, in that category, the same number of official games of the team on whose roster he is registered. This does not exempt him from serving the suspension in the category of origin.

d) Once the suspension has been fully served in the category of origin, the player is eligible again in all categories.

e) A game counts as served only if it is an official game of the player's team for which the player was eligible (valid licence, registered on the roster), and it was either actually played or lost by forfeit. A Cup game of the round robin or quarter-finals that the player sits out counts as one game served in the category of origin. Games of the Cup weekend follow paragraph h).

f) Suspensions run at the same time: a game the player sits out counts towards every ongoing suspension that applies to that category. Penalty points are deducted only for games served in the category of origin.

g) Any part of a suspension not served at the end of the season carries over to the next season under the same principles, with the following exceptions:

1. If the player has moved up to a different age category in the meantime, the remainder is served in his current age category, which becomes the category of origin.
2. If his club does not field a team in that age category and the player is eligible to play up, the remainder is served in the category he plays up to, which becomes the category of origin.

For a senior player, the category is the league of the roster section on which he is registered.

h) Cup weekend (Belgian Cup / Ultimate Games):

1. A player whose suspension cannot be fully served before the Cup weekend may not play during the Cup weekend. The Cup weekend games he misses do not count towards serving the remainder of the suspension.
2. A suspension imposed during the Cup weekend starts running immediately during the Cup weekend. Any remainder is served in the championship; if no championship games remain, it is carried over to the next season in accordance with paragraph g).

8. Sanctions

This section does not apply. The internal BIHA rules will be used.

9. Disputes

This section does not apply. The internal BIHA rules will be used.

10. Determining Final Pool Positioning in Championships

This section does not apply. The internal BIHA rules will be used.

11. Video Assisted Referee (VAR)

This section does not apply. VAR is not available for this season.

U8-10 & U12

There are some specific rules that only apply during U8-10 & U12 games. The specifics can be found below.

Slapshots are prohibited. A slapshot is a downwards motion towards the puck **starting from the waist or higher**. It does not matter whether the stick hits the puck or not, a bad slapshot is still a slapshot!

Shooting the puck up into the air, is permitted, given that it was not a slapshot. Goals scored in this manner will be allowed, unless otherwise specified in the rulebook. (e.g. crease, ...)

Equipment

Wearing a padded shirt is strongly recommended.

Any type of padded shirt is allowed, as long as it only consists out of soft materials and doesn't contain shoulder pads. If it contains any metal, hard plastic or any other material that is likely to cause injury, the shirt is prohibited!

Socks are allowed to be used in all development games instead of pants. However we recommend pants, since they will be required once the players participate in competition games. (e.g. U14/15)

Penalties

When a player is assessed a (minor or major) penalty (s)he will go to the players bench and will immediately be replaced by the first player in line on the players bench. The penalized player will join the end of the line and wait for their turn. (Push-through system) It is up to the coach to explain to the penalized player what (s)he has done wrong.

If a player is assessed a (game) misconduct penalty, (s)he will serve the entire penalty in the penalty box. During this time the player can be replaced by other players. (Push-through system) Keep in mind that if a (game) misconduct is assessed in a U12 game it must be rather severe and a "cool-down" period is in order. The player cannot return during the same game, but is allowed to participate in the next games. In case of game misconducts and/or match penalties, you have to send a report to the federation. (See email addresses above)

Specific rules regarding U8-U10

The game is played in the width direction of the field (see image below, dimensions below are indicative). This allows 2 games to be played simultaneously. Both teams have 3 players + a goalkeeper on the field at all time.

There are no ESheets required for these games, however every club that is participating is required to bring a printed copy of their tournament passports, containing the players of their club that will be participating.

The game consists of 1 period of 24 minutes running time. Every 90 seconds a bell will ring. At that time the players on the floor (except for the goalkeeper) **must** change. **Time will keep running** and players will change on the fly. To make sure every player gets an equal amount of playing time we

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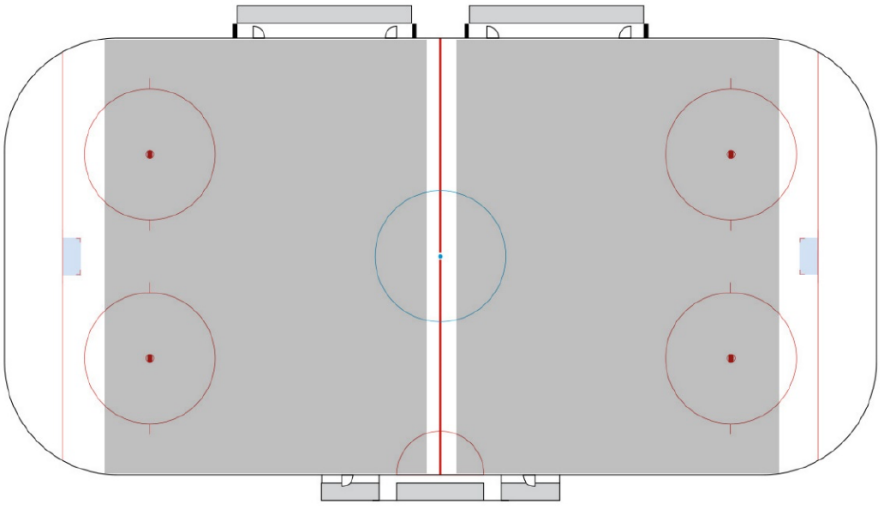
use a push-through system. Very simply put: all players form a line and when a players leaves the field the first one in the line will enter the field. The player that left the field will join the end of the line.



Specific rules regarding U12

The game is played on the entire field. Both teams have 4 players + 1 goalie on the field at all time.

The game consists of 1 period of 24 minutes running time. The clock will stop every 90 seconds and the buzzer will sound. At that time the players on the floor (except for the goalkeeper) **must** change. To make sure every player gets an equal amount of playing time we use a push-through system. Very simply put: all players form a line and the first 4 enter the field. When a player comes off the field (s)he will join the end of the line and the next 4 players enter the field.

Trial: until 31 December 2026, U12 games are played with line changes on the fly instead of the 90-second buzzer, as set out in the BIHA Competition Rules (U12).

For these games ESheet will be used, but only in a limited manner. The team rosters, bench officials and referees need to be filled in. However there is no need to enter goals, penalties, goalie changes or timeouts. The referee will still need to sign the (mostly empty) sheet at the end of the game.

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Change log

Version	Date	Basis	Subject
v1.1	23/10/2026	AM-2026-004	Section 7: suspensions – players active in several categories
v1.2	24/10/2026	Technical Commission of 06/06/2026	Integration of the decisions of the Technical Commission

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