

SHC Leagues FAQ

Last Updated: August 22, 2019

The following FAQ will be updated and published to the www.sturgeonhockeyclub.com as additional information becomes available. If you have any questions for the association, please feel free to submit them via email at leaguesdirector@sturgeonhockeyclub.com.

Background

Based on feedback from membership about challenges around travel, team competitiveness, ice slots, playoff format, and ice utilization, the SHC Executive voted unanimously to poll membership on interest in exploring an application to Edmonton Federation Hockey League (EFHL).

A poll was released to all members and after a 10-day consultation period and 211 responses, 85% of Sturgeon Hockey Club Members voted in favor of a potential league move to the EFHL.

An application was prepared by the Executive and submitted in early April for review. In late April, SHC was informed that our application had been accepted and that we were welcome to join the league for the start of the 2019-2020 season. SHC President John Schneider formally indicated SHC's acceptance of the offer to join the EFHL on April 24, 2019.

Shortly after this, the SHC League Director provided notice to Northern Alberta Interlock of SHC's withdrawal from their league effective immediately.

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How was this decision made?

Significant research and consultation was done prior to submission of an application to EFHL. An analysis on schedules, travel, tiering, and competitiveness was done to ensure EFHL could meet the needs of Sturgeon Hockey Club. This analysis was reviewed by the Executive committee prior to voting on member consultation and submission of an application.

Why are we moving?

After consultation with the membership and those with experience in the EFHL league, the Executive feels that the move will provide a better experience closer to home for all our members.

Who is moving?

Novice, Atom, PeeWee (AA included), Bantam, and Midget will all be moving to the new league. There will be no changes for Initiation, Bantam AA, or Midget AA.

What is the Edmonton Federation Hockey League?

Governed by Hockey Edmonton, The EFHL is a regional league made up of associations in the Edmonton Region.

Members include:

Beaumont
Enoch
Knights of Columbus
North East Zone
North West Hawks
Whitemud
Strathcona
St. Albert
North SEERA
Spruce Grove
Sherwood Park
Confed
South West Athletic Club

Millwoods Athletic Club
Stony Plain Minor Hockey*
Sturgeon Hockey Club*

*New members for 2019-2020.

For more information on the league, please see the Hockey Edmonton website at <http://www.hockeyedmonton.ca/>

How long are games?

Game lengths vary based on level. General league and Hockey Alberta/Hockey Canada guidelines specify the following minimum game slots

Atom: 1 hour (13-13-13)
PeeWee: 1.5 hours (15-20-20)
Bantam: 1.5 hours (15-20-20)
Midget: 2.15 hours (20-Flood-20-Flood-20)

Is there still hitting in Midget and Bantam? (Updated Aug 13)

EFHL offers hitting in Bantam and Midget Tiers 1-3. Tiers 4-6 are no-hit divisions.

For more information on why this decision was made by Hockey Edmonton back in 2016, please see the following link:

<https://globalnews.ca/news/2651002/hockey-edmonton-bans-body-checking-in-house-league/>

Sturgeon Hockey Clubs Hockey Operations committee in conjunction with the Director of Leagues will work to assess team skill level after evaluations to determine which tier each team should be placed in.

Updated Aug 13: As registration numbers are finalized and player movement requests for AA and AAA are processed, discussions around how SHC Bantam and Midget tiering levels will begin. Final team numbers and Tier placements will be finalized by mid-September.

Will there be weeknight games?

There will be significant changes to schedules for games and practices as a result of this move.

Weeknight games may be scheduled by some associations. Detailed analysis was done of a team at each division in EFHL as part of the discovery process and it was found that the number of weeknight games varied by team and association.

Some Atom teams played 4-5 weeknight games per season, while others played none. Some Midget teams played 5-7 and others played 10-12 per season. The number of weeknight games varied by association, and team.

Sturgeon Hockey Club will do its best to build a schedule that focuses on weekend home games for teams. However, until scheduling activities for the 2019-2020 season begin, no comment can be made on the number of home games that will be scheduled for weeknights.

Will practices still be on weeknights?

A challenge for Sturgeon Hockey Club over the last number of seasons has been ice utilization. In 2018-2019, over 150 hours of ice was wasted due to weekend slots going unused. While the ice wasn't used, SHC still had to pay for it. Teams were not able to commit to weekend ice as they were usually playing home games or travelling out of town to play away games.

Moving leagues and introducing weeknight games will allow Sturgeon to better balance our schedules and ensure less wastage of billable ice. EFHL has also committed to helping SHC sell surplus ice that is not used on a weekly basis after all SHC teams have been assigned their ice.

Given the need to better utilize our ice allotments, there will be practice slots assigned on weekends starting in 2019-2020. Details will be shared as scheduling starts in September.

How is Tiering done (Updated Aug 13)

Starting in 2018-2019, all leagues in Alberta moved to the Hockey Alberta Tiering guidelines. The tiering process will be the same regardless of which league SHC plays in.

This model is known as the "Alberta One Standardized Tiering Model."

Highlights of this model include:

- Six tiers within the divisions of Novice, Atom, Peewee, Bantam, Midget.
- A tiering grid to assist organizations in placing their teams within a specific division.

- The ability for larger organizations to split tiers into smaller groups based on number of teams, games to be played and travel.
- The ability for smaller organizations to utilize the grid to determine the number of tiers to operate based on number of teams.
- Teams proceed through tiering rounds for final placement determined by policies of the individual league.

This model does provide some flexibility to leagues. EFHL does a series of two re-tiers throughout the season to ensure teams are competitive within their tier. The first tiering happens at the end of the pre-season, and again before playoffs if required.

For more information on this model, please see the Hockey Alberta Information Bulletin:

https://www.hockeyalberta.ca/uploads/source/Info%20Bulletins/2017-18_Season/1712_-_Standardized_Tiering.pdf

Added Aug 13: Tiering round one will be based on a randomly assigned schedule within each Division and Tier. Tiering placement for teams will be determined by the association size and the Alberta One tiering guide.

Round two will see teams placed in the appropriate tier and one of three divisions within that tier based on the results of the tiering round.

If further adjustments are required to ensure parity, teams may be made prior to the start of the Playoff round.

If we don't want to switch leagues can we get a release to play in another association?

Releases will be handled in accordance with past practices and in alignment with Hockey Alberta Bylaw section 5 (Player Movement).

The process for Bantam and Midget AAA along with female releases will remain unchanged.

Will lower tiered Atom teams still be playing in the St. Albert Development league?

No SHC teams will be playing in the SAMHA development league for the 2019-2020 season.

A condition of acceptance in to EFHL was that all House League teams from Novice to Midget move. PeeWee AA will also be moving to the new league.

Can we still play in Tournaments outside the league?

If it is a Hockey Alberta Sanctioned event, there are no restrictions around tournaments. As in past years, your team will be responsible for re-scheduling your home and away league games.

A benefit to playing weeknight games throughout the season is that less work may be required to schedule around weekend tournaments.

Do we get to participate in Edmonton Minor Hockey Week? (Added Aug 13)

Yes, SHC teams will be participating in Edmonton Minor Hockey Week. SHC will be required to provide volunteers for the event. More information will be shared once it becomes available.

Minor Hockey week will be taking place from January 10-19, 2020.

How long will games be on weeknights? (Added Aug 13)

The following table shows the start and end times for both weeknight and weekend games for the season. These timelines are mandated by Hockey Edmonton.

Game Times									
Division	Start: Earliest			Finish: Latest					
	Mon - Thu	Fri	Sat - Sun	Mon - Thu	Fri	Sat - Sun			
Initiation: SR Timbits		17:00	7:45		19:45	18:00			
Novice	17:45			19:45					
Atom				9:00			20:45		
Pewee							21:45		
Bantam Community	18:00			22:00					
Midget Community				16:00			22:30		
Bantam Elite				12:00			22:00		
Midget Elite							22:30		

When will the season start and how many league games will we play? (Added Aug 13)

The tentative start dates and season length for each level are listed in the table below:

For All Tiers 1-6 in EFHL					
Division	Team Declaration	Season Start	# Games	Tiering Round	Season Round
Novice	13-Sep	28-Sep	18	8	10
Atom	13-Sep	28-Sep	18	8	10
Pewee	13-Sep	28-Sep	20	8	12
Bantam	23-Sep	07-Oct	20	8	12
Midget	30-Sep	14-Oct	20	8	12

Schedule does not show the playoff round which is scheduled to start on February 29th.

What is the season schedule? (Added Aug 13)

The following schedule has not been ratified by EFHL or EMHA yet and is subject to change.

Level	Tiering Round	League Break	Round 2	Edmonton Minor Hockey Week	Playoffs
Novice	Oct 1 – Nov 24	Nov 25-Dec 8	Dec 9-Mar 8	Jan 10-19	Mar 14-15
Atom	Oct 1 – Nov 24	Nov 25-Dec 8	Dec 9-Feb 28	Jan 10-19	Feb 29-Mar 20
PeeWee	Oct 1 – Nov 24	Nov 25-Dec 8	Dec 9-Feb 28	Jan 10-19	Feb 29-Mar 20
Bantam	Oct 7-Dec 1	Dec 2-13	Dec 14-Feb 28	Jan 10-19	Feb 29-Mar 20
Midget	Oct 18-Dec 1	Dec 2-13	Dec 14-Feb 28	Jan 10-19	Feb 29-Mar 20

The League Break period above gives EFHL ice scheduling staff time to process any tiering changes and schedule the rest of the season. While listed as “Practice Only” days on the EFHL calendar, teams are welcome to use that time for Exhibition and Tournaments if they wish.

Midget starts later to accommodate for final late cuts from AAA, AA, and Junior clubs.

What is the format for Novice this season? (Added Aug 13)

All Novice teams will be playing within Tiers 1-6 of the EFHL and will be following the Hockey Alberta Intro to Hockey Program. This program has been adopted from Hockey Canada and will be followed by the six largest leagues in Alberta moving forward.

A few key highlights of the model include:

Non-Negotiables:

- Full Goalie Equipment
- 4 on 4 with a goalie
- Continuous play
- Buzzer for line changes
- Faceoff only to start halves
- No position specialization
- No score is kept

No standings or stats kept
Game summary report is kept for Novice
One official per game
Travel permits are required for out of zone play or non-league games
No Jamborees, Festivals, or Tournaments prior to November 1

Violation of the above rules will put SHC into violation of Hockey Canada policy and may result in disciplinary action against the association.

Negotiables:

Recommended shift length is 1.5 minutes or less
Blue pucks are recommended
Games not to exceed an hour
Net size should be 4' x 6'
Recommended a 2:1 practice schedule to game ratio

Please note that some of the above negotiables and others listed on the Hockey Alberta website (see link below) will be determined by EFHL and may be out of the control of SHC.

For more information on the model please see the following link:

<https://www.hockeyalberta.ca/players/intro-hockey/>