



South Central Junior report

We had the following number of teams enter the SC Junior Leagues this season

GU18 – 5 teams

BU18 – 10 teams

GU16 – 35 teams

BU16 – 30 teams

GU14 – 46 teams

BU14 – 49 teams

Thank you to Scott, Stephen and Allan for their hard work in setting up and maintaining these leagues throughout the season. It's not an easy task because many clubs fail to let us know if a fixture gets postponed/cancelled. It's important to keep us informed so that we can maintain the leagues correctly. Other areas have had league finals which we would love to do but we haven't been in a position to do this because of not all matches being completed and lack of volunteers to organise these. We would love to have an end of season celebration but at the moment this looks unlikely unless clubs are more proactive and we have more volunteers.

We ask that clubs review the league that they are entering. There are many teams that could do well in a higher league, but clubs often opt for the lower league. We need clubs to think of improving what they deliver to their members and challenge themselves with a higher league. In theory there should be a curved distribution of clubs across the leagues. Currently this is not happening. T1 in all age groups and genders were in single figures, T2 slightly more and T3 were the majority of our entries. This doesn't help us deliver competitive leagues and at times results were very unbalanced. A reminder that T1 should be made up of players who play regularly and are playing at county or TA level. T2 is for the majority of clubs, T3 is for emerging clubs, smaller clubs, and those with players who play infrequently and don't play adult hockey or have just started hockey.

I had to contact several clubs this year about excessive scorelines which probably indicates that the wrong league was entered. There is absolutely nothing to be gained by a scoreline of more than 5 goal difference. The rules stipulate that the maximum goal difference is 8 goals. Please when teams get to a goal difference of 5 teams should start compensating for this (especially if this is early on in the game). Remove players, change positions, apply constraints to players if they are dominating, mix up the teams with the opposition. If you think you are going to be particularly weak please contact the opposition and warn them so that they can select a more appropriate side. If you are contacted by a club please make sure that



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you take the appropriate measures to enable everyone to have a positive experience. This is especially important at T3 level where there are many emerging players. Remember T3 is the lowest level for players to play 11 aside hockey and therefore there should not be a single player dominating the match and it should be a positive learning experience for all players.

Next season we plan to review every league at Christmas and move teams into more appropriate competitions if necessary. When you receive your fixtures, you will only be able to see fixtures until Christmas during the Christmas break your next set of fixtures will be uploaded, so please don't panic and think you have no fixtures!

Another change for next season is that we plan to run T4 7 aside festivals once a month, no results will be recorded for these. Teams will be grouped together and then a rotation of host clubs will host the festivals. These festivals will clash with county and TA actively because these players are not expected to play at this level, in fact this initiative is for emerging hockey players only for them to gain confidence with players of a similar ability.

Please let us know if you have experienced any clashes for your club with County of TA hockey which has not taken place on a priority day on the centralised calendar. Hockey activity is run via this calendar and as soon as dates aren't adhered to it causes huge problems for everyone involved in junior hockey especially the young players who is often forced to make a choice. The aim of the calendar is to take away those decisions for our young players.

We remain under resourced and would love to provide clubs with more junior hockey actively but cannot until we have more volunteers. Please get in touch if you have even just an hour or two to spare.

Kate Porter

Chair of South Central Juniors Committee