

## AGM Report 2025 – Adult League Hockey

The 2024–25 season saw continued strength in adult league hockey across London, with 334 teams participating across 29 divisions. League operations remained resilient in the face of ongoing technology and operational challenges, while the playing environment remained competitive and inclusive. This report outlines key developments in competitions, league management and strategic priorities for the coming year.

### Season Overview

- **Total Teams:** 334 (171 Men's; 163 Women's)
- **Divisions:** 29
- **Fixtures Scheduled:** 3,823 (1,980 Men's; 1,843 Women's)
- **Fixtures Forfeited** ("walkovers"): 61 (28 Men's; 33 Women's)
- **Withdrawn Teams:** 4 (3 Men's; 1 Women's)

The 2024–25 season was marked by competitive balance, sustained participation and continued operational improvement efforts.

### Men's League – Division Winners and Runners-Up

 <b>LONDON HOCKEY</b> <div>Men 2024-25</div>		
Division	Division Winner	Runner-Up
Premier	<u>Southgate M2</u>	Epsom M1
1	Richmond M2	Old Cranleigh M2
2N	Wapping M2	Indian Gymkhana M2
2S	Honor Oak M1	Surbiton M4
3N	Richmond Griffins	Wapping M3
3S	Bromley & Beckenham M3	London Edwardians M3
4E	London Academicals M2	HAC Sutlers
4NW	West Hampstead M3	Southgate M5
4SW	Teddington M4	Wimbledon M4
5E	Wanderers M6	East London M4
5NW	West Herts M4	Richmond Deerstalkers
5SW	Merton M1	Surbiton Sparticans
6E	Wapping Dockers	London Gamblers M2
6NW	Old Haberdashers M1	Richmond Stags
6SW	Epsom M5	Old Cranleigh Samurai

Congratulations to all of the Division winners and runners up, with a special mention for **Southgate M2** on securing promotion to EHL Conference East after finishing as runners-up in 2023-24. Southgate's playing record was P22, W19, D1, L2 and GD +40.

The 2024-25 season saw 171 Men's teams participating across 15 divisions in 1,980 fixtures of which 28 were forfeited. Three men's teams withdrew during the early part of the season, one of which was replaced by Richmond HC creating a new team in Division 6 North West.

## Women's League – Division Winners and Runners-Up

 <b>LONDON HOCKEY</b> <div><b>Women 2024-25</b></div>		
Division	Division Winner	Runner-Up
Premier	<u>Barnes W2</u>	Southgate W2
1	Teddington W2	Barnes W3
2N	East London W2	Wapping W2
2S	Wimbledon W4	Teddington W3
3N	Southgate W4	Ealing W1
3S	Wanderers W4	Old Cranleigh W2
4E	London Edwardians W3	Wanderers W6
4NW	West Hampstead W4	Hampstead & Westminster W6
4SW	Old Cranleigh W3	Richmond Ravens
5E	Wapping W5	Honor Oak W1
5NW	Harrow W2	West Hampstead W6
5SW	Richmond W4	Ashford (Middlesex) W2
6E	Tulse Hill & Dulwich W6	Wapping W7
6SW	Barnes Blazes	Richmond W5

Congratulations to all of the Division winners and runners up, with a deserved mention for **Barnes W2** on their promotion to EHL Conference East after finishing as runners-up in 2023-24! They were pushed all the way to the end of the season by Southgate W2, who finished just two points behind. Barnes' playing record was P22, W18, D2, L2 and GD +49.

The 2024-25 season saw 163 Women's teams competing across 14 divisions in 1,843 fixtures (33 were forfeited). Only one women's team withdrew during the season, and a few others struggled for player availability in the New Year.

## AGM Report 2025 – Adult League Hockey

### Top Goalscorers

							
		<b>LONDON HOCKEY</b>		<b>Top Goalscorers 2024-25</b>			
<b>M</b>	Player	Club	FG	PC	PS	Total	
1	Brendan DU PREEZ	Merton	21	13	0	34	
2	Lawrence MARSH	Epsom	26	5	2	33	
3	Kevin GRANT	Surbiton	19	9	0	28	
4	Jake WIGHAM	London Royals	23	2	1	26	
5=	4 players					24	
<b>W</b>	Player	Club	FG	PC	PS	Total	
1	Kirsten MEEHAN	Hampstead & Westminster	29	3	1	33	
2	Victoria ANDERSON	Berrylands	27	3	0	30	
3	Harriette SIMMONS-MASON	London Royals	26	4	0	30	
4	Megan WEBB	London Wayfarers	26	0	1	27	
5	Isabella WHITTAKER	London Wayfarers	24	1	1	26	

Congratulations to our top goalscorers Brendan du Preez (34 goals, Merton M1, Men's Division 5 South West) and Kirsten Meehan (33 goals, Hampstead & Westminster W6, Women's Division 4 North West) on their standout goalscoring records this season. Kirsten also appeared in last season's list of top scorers, so she is clearly a talented player!

### Development Teams

Of the 8 teams granted development status at the season's start, 6 reverted to standard competitive status by season's end.

This suggests that development status is an effective pathway for integrating new teams into the full competition framework.

### Indoor Hockey

- Men's Winners - **Bromley & Beckenham**
- Women's Winners - **London Wayfarers**

London's indoor competitions took place at Whitgift School over the weekend of 14-15 December.

The two winners progressed to the Division 2 South qualifiers held in January 2025. Unfortunately, neither team was able to qualify for the Division 2 National round and hence both will return to the London event next season.

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## Overview of the League Season and ALMC Activity

The Adult League Management Committee (ALMC) meetings over the past season have consistently focused on:

- Enhancing league operations, ensuring club compliance, addressing behavioural concerns and preparing for future seasons.
- Discussions have involved a balance between structural enforcement of rules and empathetic engagement with member clubs.
- Significant administrative and structural matters have been deliberated, impacting current and future hockey seasons.

## Operational Challenges

The ALMC is committed to transparent and effective governance, aligned with England Hockey policies, while fostering a fair and compliant environment for all member clubs:

- We address specific challenges and foster a positive and compliant environment for all member clubs and players.
- Key issues raised by clubs include:
  - Frustration with GMS functionality
  - Challenges with player availability
  - Disagreements over selection regulations
- We have addressed these matters through regular communication, flexibility where appropriate, and clear enforcement where needed.

While there have been many League successes on and off the field, the ALMC also faced a number of challenges:

## Complaints & Conduct

- The ALMC receives low-level complaints after matches, often related either to on-field conduct by players or umpires/umpiring standards. Umpires and captains are expected to manage conduct issues proactively during play to prevent escalation and post-match disputes.
- More **serious** issues should be brought to our attention or perhaps necessitate a Disrepute complaint being raised with England Hockey, which has professional staff to handle such matters.
- Umpires should manage incidents during matches and **sanction** players, including captains, or coaches if they fail to control their team appropriately.
- England Hockey's new **Code of Conduct** was released before the season commenced.

## Selection and Eligibility

- Clubs have reasonable **flexibility** in managing player selection and must select players for their League teams in hierarchical order based on their availability, with the understanding that players should not be selected at a lower level than their Regular Team to strengthen a lower ranked team.

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- The ALMC conducted analyses to identify **violations** of fair selection and imposed several **sanctions** on teams that fielded players who were ineligible to play.
- Player transfers and registration have presented ongoing challenges for clubs and administrators.
- The ALMC faced a significant increase in Selection Exemption Pass (SXP) requests, with 375 total for the year (vs 240 in 2023-24), of which 239 (vs 72) were in the final four weeks of the season.

### Match Disruptions

- Severe weather disrupted two weekends significantly.
- Most clubs succeeded in rearranging fixtures within required timeframes.

### Club Appointed Umpires

- The league faces challenges in umpire recruitment and retention, with a significant **shortage of umpires**, particularly for higher level games in grade 3.
- Clubs must ensure umpires are EH Officiating members and registered in advance or within 24 hours post-match.

### Technology

- **GMS:** Game Management System issues have been a recurring concern, particularly regarding player transfers, registrations, website data display and general system inefficiencies.
- England Hockey's communication and IT strategy have been a source of frustration, with delays in updates on IT systems and Level 1 umpiring courses.
- The working groups formed by England Hockey last season to address concerns about GMS functionality continue to meet and push for system improvements. The group has three focus areas, with further improvement anticipated for next season:
  - **Matchday Processes:** Continuing need to simplify the process so that entries can be completed quickly and easily.
  - **Transfer Process:** Issues persist with transfers outside of deadlines and players re-registering instead of transferring correctly.
  - **Data Issues:** Efforts to improve data accuracy and reporting capabilities continue.

### Looking Ahead

- **Eligibility:** The committee has actively addressed player misconduct and rule violations, implementing sanctions for fielding ineligible players and falsifying match sheets, such as point deductions and fines with the need for consistent sanctioning a priority. We expect teams and players at all levels to comply with the Adult League Regulations or they may face penalties, including points deductions and fines. Some examples include:

- Full completion of GMS team sheets prior to match, including shirt numbers for all teams;
- Completion of GMS match sheets, including all goalscorers, and green/yellow/red cards;
- All players to be correctly registered in GMS and transfers completed properly;
- Rearranged fixtures to be played within the required time frame rather than being delayed.  
The window for such rearrangements is being expanded to 36 days for the 2025-26 season.
- **Balancing Competitiveness and Inclusivity:** Ensuring that the league remains competitive while also being inclusive for players of all skill levels is a delicate balance and continuous efforts are made to address this by permitting Development teams.
  - The aim is to enable new, young or returning players to gain league experience and to develop their ability and confidence.
  - The role of any experienced players selected is to provide support and guidance to developing players.
  - The intention is to encourage teams that would not ordinarily play adult league hockey, rather than relaxing the rules for existing adult teams.
- **Officiating:** Governance is covered in the standalone Officiating report. However, operational efforts continue to raise minimum standards, including Level 1 requirements for Grade 3, despite known resource constraints.

## Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all clubs for their continued commitment and cooperation. Special thanks to the players, team managers, coaches, umpires, volunteers and supporters who make the League successful..

My personal thanks to the members of the London Area League Management Committee for their continuing hard work on behalf of London's hockey clubs:

*Liz Laird, Sherry Parnell, Georga Reed, Kam Roopra, Chris Savory, Shaf Moledina and David Lloyd-Williams.*

## Conclusion

The 2024-2025 season demonstrated the resilience of hockey in London despite significant challenges. While we faced issues with technology, weather and behavioural standards, the commitment of clubs, volunteers and players kept competitions running successfully.

As we plan for 2025–26, our focus remains on addressing the umpire shortage, improving administrative systems, and upholding fairness and accessibility across all league activities.

We thank all member clubs for their patience, support and dedication throughout a challenging but ultimately successful season. Your feedback and engagement remain crucial as we look to 2025-26 and beyond.

The ALMC remains committed to serving its member clubs and delivering competitive, fair and enjoyable hockey for all participants across London.

Paul Mangat  
Chair, Adult Leagues & Competitions Committee  
10 July 2025