



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number:

ARTICLE 1

Heading:

REGISTRATION, ELIGIBILITY, GENERAL
RULES

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number:

Section E pg. 46

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

CURRENT WORDING:

PROPOSED WORDING: CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH

A player may not be registered with more than one (1) association, or more than one (1) team in the same age classification, unless a female player is registered on one (1) youth team and one (1) girls team at the same age level. NOTE: This will be identified as “cross-roster”. (An association that wishes to cross-roster a female player MUST complete the on-line Cross-Rostering Form on the WAHA website for approval by November 15th. Cross-roster players on a secondary team will only be eligible for State Tournament with the secondary team if the roster has 14 or less players. Any player can, however, as long as the player meets age classification, be registered with more than one team in a different age classification within the same association. A player may only be on a maximum of two rosters.

Addendum to Section E:

Full-time goalies are eligible to roster up to three (3) teams in home organization.

1. **Lateral or Upward Movement Only**
 - a. **Equal or higher competitive level (e.g., B → B or B → A)**
2. **No substituting for lower classifications or younger age groups (14U can not roster on 12U; A level designated goalies cannot play with lower-level teams)**
3. **State Tournament eligibility is not granted unless the goalie meets the required minimum number of league games played.**
4. **A player shall only be eligible to participate as a goalie for any rostered team other than their primary team.**

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):

Please see below for additional information.

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Jeff Tomchek – VP on Ice – Elmbrook Youth Hockey

DATE RECEIVED: 4/11/26

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 2026 R-41 (goalie rost)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-41 (p. 2)

Applies to: WAHA Youth Rules – Article 1.E (Rostering) and Section VII (Goalie Substitutions)

1. Overview of the Current WAHA Goalie Rostering Rule

Under current WAHA Youth Rules, goaltenders are governed by the same roster restrictions as skaters.

Key elements of the existing framework:

- **One-Team Restriction (Article 1.E):**
A player may only be rostered to one team per age classification. This applies equally to skaters and goalies.
- **Limited Double-Rostering:**
Double-rostering is permitted only across different age levels (e.g., a 10U goalie playing up at 12U), not between teams of the same age group (e.g., a 12U B goalie playing up at 12U A).
- **Emergency Backup Goalie (E-BUG) Policy:**
 - Primarily limited to State Tournament play
 - Requires manual District Director approval
 - Designed as an exception for post-season emergencies, not routine league play

Practical impact:

If a team's rostered goalie is unavailable during the regular season, there is no practical mechanism to use a trained goalie from another team within the same association—even when that goalie is:

- Properly registered
- Of equal or higher competitive level
- Available and willing to play

2. Why the Current Rule Needs to Change

The existing rule structure conflicts with the operational reality of modern youth hockey.

A. Goalie scarcity is structural, not situational

- Associations often have fewer goalies than teams
- A single illness, injury, or school conflict can force:
 - Game forfeits
 - Skaters playing goalie with limited training
 - Unsafe or inequitable competitive outcomes



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-41 (p. 3)

B. The rules are skater-centric

- Goaltenders are a specialized position with unique equipment, training, and safety considerations
- Treating goalies identically to skaters ignores these differences

C. The E-BUG process is “high-friction”

- Requires advance coordination and District approval
- Impractical for short-notice regular-season needs
- Effectively unusable outside tournament play

D. Unintended consequences

- Increased “skater-in-net” situations, which raise injury risk
- Parent and athlete burnout
- Lost games, lost development opportunities, and lost confidence in the system

3. Creation of an Intra-Association Goalie Pool

An exception to Article 1.E for the goalie position only.

Associations may designate properly registered goalies as **Emergency Substitute Goaltenders (ESGs)** for teams within the same association, subject to guardrails.

Teams in which their only goalie is suspended by USA Hockey/WAHA, will be allowed to roster an EBU-G after review and approval of WAHA.

Key conditions:

1. **Lateral or Upward Movement Only**
 - Equal or higher competitive level (e.g., B → B or B → A)
 - Lateral movement to a lower level is not permitted.
2. **No Play-Down Provision**
 - No substituting for lower classifications or younger age groups

4. Expansion of the E-BUG Rule to Regular Season Play

The existing E-BUG concept is retained but modernized.

Changes include:

- **Season-long applicability** covers regular season, league, and tournament games. State tournament eligibility still requires the minimum league game requirement.
- **Clear trigger conditions:**
Injury, illness, school, family obligation, or other bona fide conflict



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-41 (p. 4)

- **Simplified notification:**

Substitution recorded on the official game sheet instead of requiring pre-approval, provided the goalie comes from within the same association

5. Guardrails to Protect Competitive Integrity

To prevent abuse and roster stacking, the proposal includes firm safeguards:

- **5-Game Minimum Rule:**

A goalie must appear in at least five regular-season games with the team to be eligible for State playoffs

- **Medical Waiver for Late Injuries:**

Post-season substitutions (EBU-G) still require District approval and documentation

- **No-Bench Rule:**

A healthy rostered goalie may not be displaced by a substitute

6. Why This Change Benefits WAHA

Safety

A trained goalie—even from a lower tier—is safer than an untrained skater in goalie equipment.

Equity

This aligns Youth (Co-ed) rules with flexibility already present elsewhere in WAHA frameworks, creating more consistent treatment across programs.

Retention and Development

- Reduces stress on goalie families
- Increases meaningful game opportunities
- Keeps players in the position longer

7. Summary

- The current rule was written for skaters, not goalies
- It no longer reflects the realities of youth hockey
- Neighboring states already use safer, more flexible models
- Elmbrook's proposal introduces measured, accountable flexibility without sacrificing competitive integrity

Requested action:

Adopt the proposed amendments for the **2026–2027 season**.



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number: Article 2

Heading: Emergency Goaltender for State Tournament Play

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number: Section 38; pg 74-75

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

PROPOSED WORDING: CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH

CURRENT WORDING:

38. Emergency Goaltender for State Tournament Play

A team whose goaltender suffers a disabling injury/sickness may apply for an emergency replacement goaltender for state tournament play. The request must be submitted in writing to the Section Director for the age level the team plays in. The request should include the injury/illness suffered, the prognosis if the goalie may be able to return, the level of the replacement goalie and any other pertinent information that may apply. The Section Director will review and approve or disapprove the request. If approved the injured goalie will be noted on the roster and is no longer eligible to play. The replacement goalie will be added to the roster and the roster submitted to the Regional Registrar for approval. The 5-game requirement and the December 31 deadline for roster changes will be waived. NOTE: Teams/associations should consider adding a 2nd goalie to the roster prior to December 31 from the level below when possible.

REMOVE RULE 38
Replace it with Minnesota YH Rule (per below)

Per Minnesota Youth Hockey 2025 2026 Handbook:

(full rule will read like MN Youth Hockey, current wording would be replaced by the below proposal)

Please see attached sheet for proposed rule update.

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Jeff Tomchek – VP on Ice – Elmbrook Youth Hockey

DATE RECEIVED: 4/11/26

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 2026 R-42 (mn ebug)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-42 (p. 2)

Tournament Goalie Rules (WAHA)

It is recommended that each team in state and region tournaments dress two goalies. If the team doesn't have two goalies, an Emergency Backup Goalie (E-BUG) may be chosen from a team in its league or association. Such an E-BUG may be chosen from the same or a lower—but not higher—playing division. If a team has played its games with players from its own team, the E-BUG is not available.

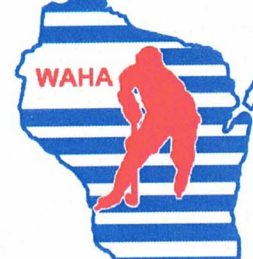
30

1. Failing the above, an E-BUG may be chosen from within the team's district or finally from the vicinity in which the tournament is being played.
2. The E-BUG may play ONLY in case the regular goalie is unable to play, as determined by the tournament host District Director or Tournament Director.
3. The E-BUG shall wear the light or dark jersey of the in-season team on which they are rostered. This must be the opposite color from the team they are playing for if they are from the same association.
4. The E-BUG retains their eligibility with their parent team or organization at their original classification for the balance of the playing season, whether or not they actually play as an E-BUG.
5. The E-BUG must be properly registered on a WAHA team for the current season to be eligible to participate in a region or state tournament.
 - o *Proof of registration, such as a copy of their parent team's registration roster, will be required during tournament check-in. * NOTE: The objective of the rule is to allow a team to obtain a backup goalkeeper during region and state WAHA play. The rule is not intended to permit teams to improve their goaltending by drafting an additional player.*
6. The releasing/receiving District Director(s) must approve, using the WAHA E-BUG Goalie Form.

Replacement Goalies

If a team carries only one goalie on its roster and that goalie is not available for region or state tournament play, a REPLACEMENT goalie may be chosen from a team in its league or association. Such a "replacement" goalie may be chosen from the same or a lower—but not higher—playing division.

1. If a "replacement" goalie is not available from within a team's league or association, one may be chosen from among the teams in its district; or failing the above, from its region.
2. The "replacement" goalie shall wear the jersey of the in-season team on which they are rostered. This must be the opposite color from the team for which they are acting as a replacement if from the same association.
3. The "replacement" goalie retains eligibility with their parent team at their original classification for the balance of the playing season.
4. The "replacement" goalie must be properly registered on a WAHA team for the current season.
 - o *Proof of registration (copy of parent team's roster) is required at check-in. * NOTE: The objective is to provide a backup; it is not intended to permit teams to "scout" or improve goaltending by drafting.*
5. The releasing/receiving District Director(s) must approve, using the WAHA Replacement Goalie Form.



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number:

Article 6

Heading:

**TIER I AND NATIONAL TOURNAMENT BOUND
TEAMS – RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number:

**D. GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING
NUMBER OF TEAMS 1. C. Page 87**

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

CURRENT WORDING:

PROPOSED WORDING: CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH

c. An organization may field one (1) Team at each of the following levels:

Youth	Girls
18U	19U
16U	16U
15O	14U
14U	12U
13O	
12U Youth Major	
12U Youth Minor	
10U Major	
9O	

c. An organization may field one (1) Team at each of the following levels:

Youth	Girls
18U	19U
16U	16U
15O	14U
14U	12U
13O	
12U Youth Major	
12U Youth Minor	
10U Major	
9O	

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):

This is to provide directors with a stepping-stone in compared to another submitted rule proposal that cuts Tier I to 13O / 14U. See Attached – Summary is to restrict Tier I teams IN SEASON to be 12U and older to promote more development at younger ages. Spring/Summer/Fall and wrap-around would be free to form teams at any age level like they can today. For background, I fully support the Tier I model, just feel that aligning with the data and notably MN’s values at younger ages would when all is said and done develop more talent across the entire state – which the data and scholarly literature proves.

(NOTE: SEE 2026 R-30 FOR A SIMILAR PROPOSAL – SAME AUTHOR)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-43 (p. 2)

The following provisions of the 2025–26 WAHA Guidebook would be directly affected.

Article 6, Section IV.D.1.c — Tier I Team Levels

The Youth column currently lists: 18U, 16U, 15O, 14U, 13O, 12U Youth Major, 12U Youth Minor, 10U Major, 9O. The proposal would amend this to: **18U, 16U, 14U, 13O, 12U Youth Major, and 12U Youth Minor** only.

Article 6, Section IV.D.2 — 10U Major ADM Provision

The paragraph permitting Tier I Organizations to field a 10U Youth Major team subject to ADM Guidelines would be deleted in its entirety, as there would no longer be a 10U Tier I level.

Article 6, Section IV.E.1.a — Minimum Requirements

Currently requires a Tier I Organization to field a minimum of three teams, with two at the major level and one major team at 14U Youth. This provision would remain unchanged. The three-team minimum can still be met with 12Us, 14U, 16U, and 18U youth teams alone (or any combination thereof).

Article 6, Section IV.E.1.e — Out-of-State Player Limits

The out-of-state roster limits table currently includes lines for 10U (zero), 11U (zero), 12U (one), 13U (two), and 15O (six). The lines for 10U, 11U, 12U, and 13U would be removed. The remaining lines (12U, 13O, 14U, 16U, 18U, 19U) are unaffected.

State Tournaments and Section Directors

Youth 10U and Youth 12U state tournaments are association-level events and are **not affected** by this proposal. The Section Director positions for Youth 8U, 10U, and 12U (Article 7.D) remain unchanged. Those directors oversee association-level state tournaments, not Tier I competition.

Rationale

Wisconsin is not developing as many top-level players as other states. For starters, Wisconsin has many fewer NCAA prospects as Minnesota. This past year, WI had 52 NCAA D1 players across men's and women's and MN had 370. On the University of WI teams, only Quinn Finley, Bella Vasseur, and McKayla Zilisch hailed from WI. This trend has repeated itself over the past several years. Furthermore, there is myriad number of scholarly journal articles saying that Tier I and forcing players to be “elite” at a young age is spurring development and accelerating burnout. Per the April 1st Presidents call hosted by Fran Finco, Wisconsin unfortunately extremely underperformed developing national bound teams this year. We were able to finish in a tie for 14th place – notably behind even Missouri. Something needs to change to get us back to the top!



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

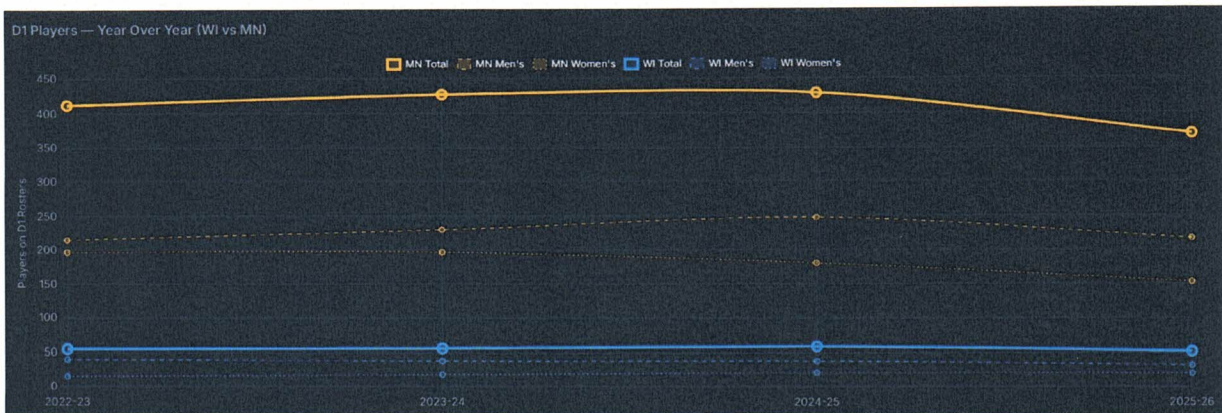
2026 R-43 (p. 3)

Study	Key Finding	Link
Soberlak & Côté (2003) <i>J. Applied Sport Psychology</i>	Early specialization is not necessary for elite hockey expertise. Elite players followed a multi-sport sampling pathway through age 12 and spent more time in deliberate play than structured practice before age 20.	View Article
Schwarb et al. (2023) <i>Frontiers in Sports & Active Living</i>	OHL players exceeded a 2:1 organized-training-to-free-play ratio by age 12 (an injury risk factor). Enjoyment of hockey declined by age 16. Coaches discouraged multi-sport participation despite evidence favoring it.	View Article
Bean, Fortier et al. (2016) <i>Cogent Psychology</i>	Youth hockey specialization linked to increased burnout, dropout, and substance use. Psychological needs dissatisfaction was associated with poorer mental health outcomes.	View Article
Huard Pelletier & Lemoyne (2022) <i>Sports (MDPI)</i>	Early specialization in Canadian minor hockey doubles overuse-injury risk, promotes premature dropout, and lowers perceived competence due to increased negative coach feedback.	View Article
Jayanthi et al. (2013) <i>Sports Health</i>	Athletes who sampled more activities ages 0–12 needed less sport-specific practice to reach expertise. Early diversification leads to fewer injuries and longer participation.	View Article
Myer, Jayanthi & DiFiori et al. (2015) <i>Sports Health</i>	Highly specialized young athletes are at greater risk of serious overuse injuries. Early specialization increases negative outcomes without clear performance benefits.	View Article
Côté, Lidor & Hackfort (2009) <i>Int. J. Sport & Exercise Psychology</i>	ISSP position stand: children should sample multiple sports until approximately age 13. Early specialization is unnecessary for most sports and carries developmental risks.	View Article
Lachance et al. (2025) <i>Frontiers in Sports & Active Living</i>	Analysis of 10,485 NHL-drafted players over 44 years shows systematic relative age bias in youth selection. Later-born players who survive selection demonstrate faster NHL entry and higher career permanence.	View Article



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-43 (p. 4)





Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 USA Hockey Nationals — Teams by State

Youth T1 (72) + Youth T2 (125) + Girls T1 (~46) + Girls T2 (82) + High School (56) = **381 teams** from **46 states**. Click any header to sort.

State	Youth T1	Youth T2	Girls T1	Girls T2	HS	Total ▼
Massachusetts MA	6	4	6	10	3	29
Pennsylvania PA	6	8	3	9	1	27
Minnesota MN	4	3	7	7	4	25
New York NY	6	4	3	6	3	22
Michigan MI	9	3	3	5	1	21
Connecticut CT	6	3	3	5	2	19
California CA	4	4	3	1	4	16
Illinois IL	3	3	2	3	1	12
South Dakota SD	3	4	1	2	2	12
Texas TX	3	4	2	1	2	12
Colorado CO	2	3	1	1	4	11
Alaska AK	1	3	2	3	1	10
Missouri MO	3	4	1	1	1	10
Florida FL	2	3	1	1	2	9
New Jersey NJ	3	4	1	1	—	9
Wisconsin WI	—	2	1	4	2	9
Arizona AZ	1	4	—	1	2	8
Ohio OH	1	3	—	3	1	8
Tennessee TN	2	4	—	2	—	8
Maryland MD	1	3	—	2	1	7
Montana MT	—	3	—	2	1	6
New Hampshire NH	—	3	1	1	1	6
North Dakota ND	2	2	1	1	—	6
Utah UT	—	3	—	2	1	6
Washington WA	—	3	1	1	1	6
Idaho ID	—	2	—	1	2	5

1 Keep Young Players in Their Communities

WAHA’s mission is to “guide, grow and support ice hockey participants of all ages and abilities, in a safe, fun, equitable and inclusive environment.” The 82 local associations that make up WAHA are the backbone of this mission. When Tier I organizations recruit 9-, 10-, 11-, and 12-year-olds away from those associations, it fractures the community-based hockey experience. The departing players lose their neighborhood teammates, carpool routines, and local rink culture. The players who remain lose their most competitive peers, resulting in weaker teams, less competitive games, and diminished enthusiasm. Local associations lose registration revenue and, in some cases, the ability to field a team at all. By limiting Tier I entry to 12U and above, this proposal ensures that every young player in Wisconsin grows up in the local association system through their most formative hockey years.



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-43 (p. 6)

2 Align with the American Development Model (ADM)

USA Hockey's ADM is built on the principle that early childhood and pre-adolescent athletes benefit most from broad-based skill development, not early specialization and elite selection. WAHA already embraces this at the youngest ages: 8U is cross-ice only, no Tier I teams exist at 8U, and the 10U Tier I provision comes with ADM compliance requirements precisely because the organization recognizes the developmental risks at that age. This proposal takes the ADM philosophy to its logical conclusion. If the rationale for restricting 8U to cross-ice play and imposing ADM guardrails at 10U is that young players need age-appropriate development over elite competition, that same rationale applies with equal force through 10U. The neuromuscular, cognitive, and emotional development of a 10-year-old and a 12-year-old are far more similar than different; both are pre-adolescent athletes for whom broad skill development, multi-sport participation, and positive team experiences matter far more than competing for a select roster spot.

3 Reduce Financial and Travel Burden on Families

Core Value #4 affirms WAHA's commitment to keeping hockey affordable. Tier I hockey requires statewide and out-of-state travel, tournament entry fees, and significant time commitments from families. For families with 9- to 12-year-olds, these costs are especially burdensome—and the competitive return on investment at these ages is marginal compared to what local association play can deliver. Families in rural and smaller communities face the added disadvantage of greater travel distances to Tier I practices and games, effectively pricing them out of participation. Removing Tier I below 130 ensures that no Wisconsin family must choose between elite development for their 10-year-old and financial stability, and that access to competitive hockey is determined by talent and passion, not zip code and income. The current out-of-state limits already restrict Tier I rosters to zero out-of-state players at 10U and 11U, and just one at 12U. WAHA's boundary and release rules (Article 1) require interstate transfer protocols and affiliate approval. While a small number of families may pursue out-of-state options, the vast majority will remain with their local Wisconsin associations, where they will benefit from stronger local competition with more balanced rosters.

4 Strengthen the Tier I Program at 130 and Above

This proposal does not weaken Tier I hockey—it concentrates it where it has the greatest impact. By feeding more players through local associations during their younger years, the pool of 130 and 14U-eligible players will be larger, more broadly skilled, and more competitively balanced. Players who emerge from strong local programs at 130/14U will be better prepared for Tier I demands than those who were selected at 9 or 10 and may have developed in a narrower competitive environment.



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-43 (p. 7)

5 Preserve All Association-Level Competition Below 14U

This proposal removes *only the Tier I select-team pathway* below 13O/14U. Everything else remains intact. Youth 10U and 12U state tournaments continue. Local associations continue to classify teams, preserving competitive stratification. Co-op teams remain available for smaller associations. The Section Directors for Youth 8U, 10U, and 12U continue to oversee their age-level programs. No playing opportunities are eliminated—they are redistributed back to the 82 local associations that form WAHA’s foundation. USA Hockey National Tournaments at Tier I are held at 18U, 16U, and 14U—exactly the levels this proposal preserves. There are no USA Hockey National Tier I Tournaments at 12U, 10U, or the O-year levels. Wisconsin’s national competitiveness is unaffected.

6 Align closer with the Minnesota Hockey Model

Minnesota Hockey—the largest USA Hockey affiliate in the country and Wisconsin’s neighbor and primary competitive peer—provides a compelling precedent for this proposal. When Minnesota Hockey established its Tier I framework in 2015, it made a deliberate decision to limit Tier I to only those age groups eligible for USA Hockey National Championships and to protect its community-based association model. Minnesota’s Tier I program launched at Youth 16U and 18U and Girls 16U and 19U. In 2016, it expanded to include Youth 14U, 15O, 13O, and Girls 14U—but it has *never* offered Tier I at 12U, 10U, or younger for either boys or girls.

Minnesota’s approach is grounded in several design principles that directly parallel the goals of this proposal:

- **Community-based model preserved:** Minnesota Hockey explicitly designed its Tier I system to “enhance”—not replace—its community-based association and high school model. All Tier I players return to their association or high school teams during the regular season.
- **District-based teams, not private organizations:** At the 13O, 14U, and 15O levels, Minnesota’s Tier I teams are organized by Minnesota Hockey districts—geographic regions, not independent select organizations. Each district holds tryouts and fields a team, ensuring statewide representation and preventing any single private program from consolidating talent.
- **No Tier I below 13O:** Minnesota’s youngest Tier I classification is 13O (13-year-olds only). There is no 12U, no 10U, and no 9O Tier I team in Minnesota. Players 12 and under develop entirely within their local associations.



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-43 (p. 8)

- **Proven competitive success:** Despite having no Tier I program below 130, Minnesota remains one of the most dominant hockey states in the nation. Minnesota districts regularly compete at and win USA Hockey National Championships at every Tier I level. The model demonstrates that keeping young players in local associations through 12U does not hinder—and may enhance—elite development at older ages.

Wisconsin and Minnesota share a border and draw from similar hockey cultures. Aligning WAHA's Tier I entry point with Minnesota's approach would create competitive and philosophical consistency across the district, make cross-border scheduling and player development pathways more coherent, and adopt a model that the nation's largest hockey state has proven successful over the past decade.

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Nick Trentadue – President, McFarland Youth Hockey Association

DATE RECEIVED: 4/13/26 **PROPOSAL NUMBER:** 2026 R-42 (T I align)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number: Article 2

Heading: State Tournaments

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number: Section B, Sub-Section 30; page 63

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

CURRENT WORDING:

All State Tournament games at the Youth, High School, 18U and 16U, and Girls 19U and 16U classifications must be officiated using the three official (1 Referee, 2 Linesmen) system. However, the two-referee/two-linesmen system may be used in the above classifications. Associations bidding on these levels must be prepared to bring in official from outside of their associations in order to fulfill this requirement. These games will require Level 3 or Level 4 officials for all Referee and Linesman positions.

PROPOSED WORDING: CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH

All State Tournament games at ~~the Youth, High School, 18U and 16U, and~~ Girls 19U and 16U classifications must be officiated using the three official (1 Referee, 2 Linesmen) system. However, the two-referee/two-linesmen system may be used in the above classifications. **All Midget/HS level regional and state tournament games must use the two-referee/two-linesmen (2 Referee, 2 Linesmen) system.** Associations bidding on these levels must be prepared to bring in officials from outside of their associations in order to fulfill this requirement. These games will require Level 3 or Level 4 officials for all Referee and Linesman positions.

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):
To increase referee visibility, ensure safety of all players and promote fair play.

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Josh Retzleff, Dir HS Hockey ; SHAW

DATE RECEIVED: 4/14/26 **PROPOSAL NUMBER:** 2026 R-44 (16U refs)

Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.



PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number:

Article 1

Heading:

REGISTRATION, ELIGIBILITY, GENERAL
RULES

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number:

Section O, Paragraph 1, Page 52

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

CURRENT WORDING:

Interstate Player Transfer Protocol: The Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Assn., Inc. (WAHA), a duly registered affiliate of USA Hockey, requires that any player who resides in another state and wishes to play hockey with a team in the WAHA program, without changing his/her residence to Wisconsin, must first obtain a properly executed waiver from the player's resident state. Exceptions to this are areas in which there are border agreements with WAHA.

PROPOSED WORDING: CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH

Interstate Player Transfer Protocol: The Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Assn., Inc. (WAHA), a duly registered affiliate of USA Hockey, requires that any player who resides in another state and wishes to play hockey with a team in the WAHA program, without changing his/her residence to Wisconsin, must first obtain a properly executed waiver from the player's resident state. Exceptions to this are areas in which there are border agreements with WAHA.

***All border agreements are available for review prior to the start of the season (WAHA to state where those are to be found)**

***Out of state "border communities" will be defined by specific cities/towns and or geographic lines**

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):

To ensure that all WAHA club boundaries are clearly denoted and defined by specific cities/towns/high schools and or geographic lines. Ensure that all border agreements are posted publicly on the WAHA site so that any club can easily reference them.

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION:

Josh Retzleff, Dir HS Hockey ; SHAW

DATE RECEIVED: 4/14/26

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 2026 R-45 (HS boundaries)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number: Article 1

Heading: REGISTRATION, ELIGIBILITY, GENERAL RULES

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number: Section B, Subsection 7; page 57

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

CURRENT WORDING:

PROPOSED WORDING: CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH

7. The host city is automatically entered in the state tournament.

The host city is automatically entered in the state tournament, **however if host city has multiple teams at the Youth High School, 18U, 16U level, the higher ranked team must receive the automatic bid. This ranking will be determined by using the My Hockey Rankings - Team Rating as of two weeks prior to Playdown Weekend.**

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):

To ensure that an organization's highest ranked team within the Midget (16U/18U) level receives the autobid for hosting the state tournament.

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Josh Retzleff, Dir HS Hockey ; SHAW

DATE RECEIVED: 4/14/26 **PROPOSAL NUMBER:** 2026 R-46 (host city)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number: Article 2

Heading: State Tournaments

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number: Section B; Subsection #15; page 59

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

CURRENT WORDING:

No current wording – new paragraph.

PROPOSED WORDING: CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH

We propose that a new sub-section a. be added to item 15. Title - Section B; Sub-section 15 (added as 15a.) will pertain ONLY to the youth 16U/18U level. Please see page #2 for complete verbiage.

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):

To create a new youth 16U/18U level specific state tournament sub-section within the WAHA guidebook giving all organizations fielding youth 16U/18U level teams a voice when determining the format and structure of the youth 16U/18U level State playdown and Tournament process.

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Josh Retzleff, Dir HS Hockey ; SHAW

DATE RECEIVED: 4/14/26 **PROPOSAL NUMBER:** 2026 R-47 (tms 16U-18U)

Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.



2026 R-47, p. 2

In terms of the youth 16U/18U level, state tournament qualification shall be assessed by the following:

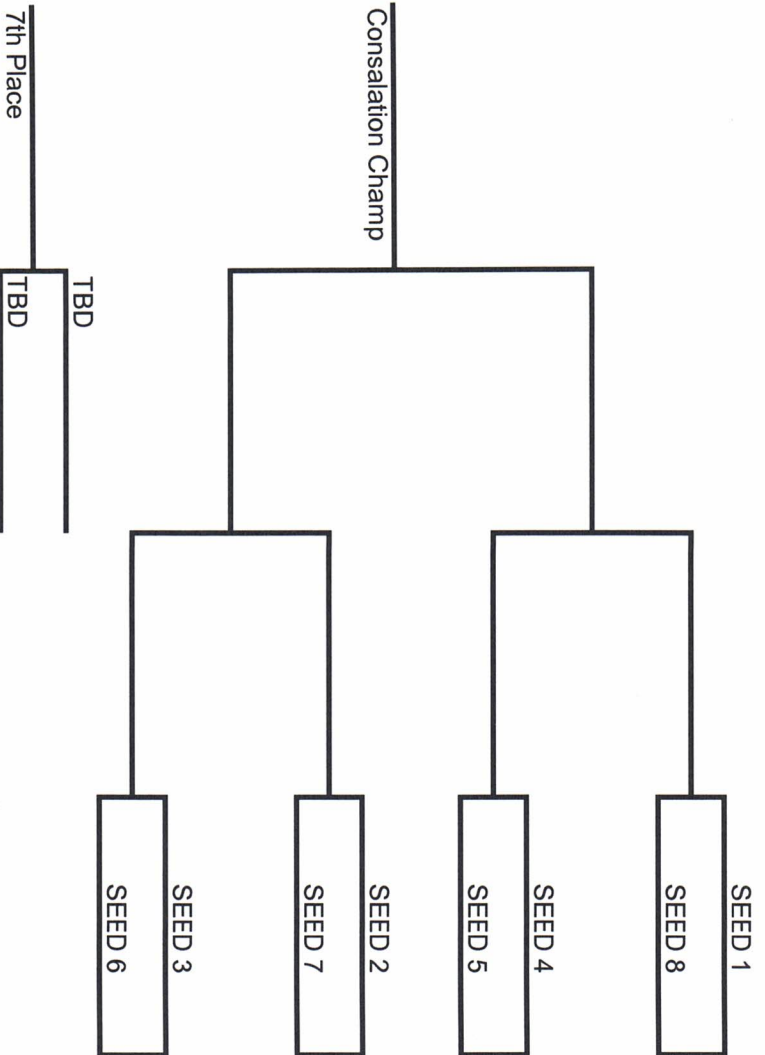
- **For State playdowns and tournament ONLY, competing teams will not be determined by region rather by the number of teams applying for the state tournament and WAHA/MyHockeyRankings team ranking.**
- **The tournament structure will be determined each year, based on the number of youth 16U/18U teams declaring their intent to attend the youth 16U/18U level state tournament by the third Sunday in November.**
- **At the youth 16U/18U there will not be any autobids given. The only exception will be for the state host team/organization. However, if the host team/organization has more than one team participating at the same level in the state tournament, the highest ranked team (WAHA/MyHockey Rankings) will be given the autobid.**
- **Each team applying to attend the youth 16U/18U level state tournament shall send a team representative to the WAHA youth 16U/18U State playoff/tournament format meeting with a date to be determined by the WAHA youth 16U/18U section director and held no later than December 1st. (This annual meeting can be held in-person or via online platform.)**
- **The format meeting will be held to decide if playdowns will be needed, as well as determine the structure of State Playdowns and the Tournament based on majority agreement of those in attendance. This meeting will also determine how State tournament spots will be awarded.**

(Please see youth 16U/18U State Bracket Addendum 1 dated 4.14.2026 for potential playdown and State Tournament scenarios.)

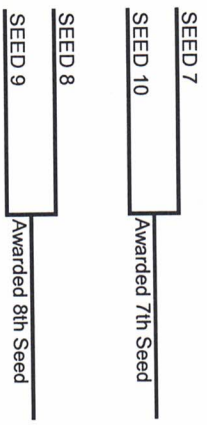
Playdowns Weekend



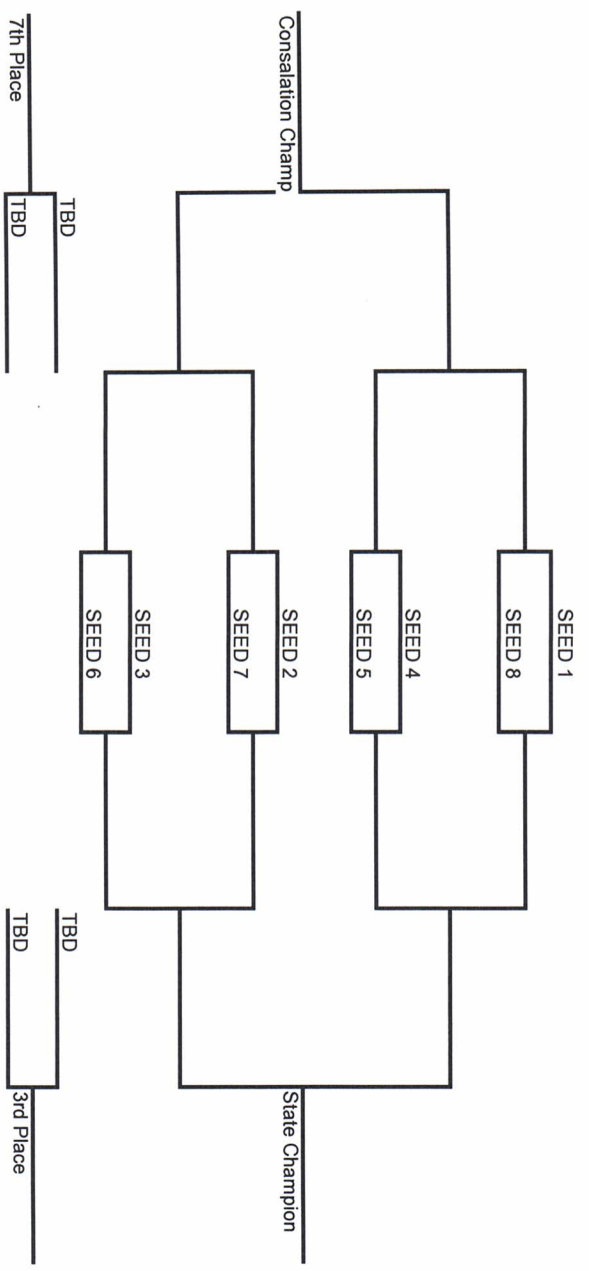
State Weekend



Playdowns Weekend



State Weekend





Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number: Article 2

Heading: State Tournaments

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number: Section 16; sub-section C; page 59

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

PROPOSED WORDING: CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH

CURRENT WORDING:

No WIAA players are eligible for State Tournament play.

~~No WIAA players are eligible for State Tournament play.~~
No WIAA (Wisconsin), IHSHL (Illinois), MHSAA (Michigan), MSHSL (Minnesota), or ISHAA (Iowa) high school players are eligible for WAHA State or Regional (playdown) or Tournament play.

- **Organizations are responsible for researching and identifying ineligible players, then reporting them to WAHA prior to state playdowns and tournament.**
- **If ineligible players are identified and confirmed, they will not be allowed to play.**

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):

To extend the existing WAHA rule that bars WIAA players from participating in seeding, state and regional tournament games to also bar players from other states where playing High School and club team games concurrently is allowed.

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Josh Retzleff, Dir HS Hockey ; SHAW

DATE RECEIVED: 4/14/26 **PROPOSAL NUMBER:** 2026 R-48 (no WIAA)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number: Article 1

Heading: Registration, Eligibility, General Rules

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number: V – new section – page 54

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

**PROPOSED WORDING:
CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED
DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH**

CURRENT WORDING:

NONE - new paragraph

V. GameSheet will be used by WAHA Associations for scorekeeping of games. Rosters must be imported to GameSheet using the USAH Team ID method

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):

The use of GameSheet provides clarity for associations, officials and teams. Requiring the method of roster importing through USAH team ID ensures that all players and coaches are eligible for team play, and provides a backup for team management for roster accuracy.

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Robin Bilsborough – Region 5 Director

DATE RECEIVED: 4/15/26 **PROPOSAL NUMBER:** 2026 R-49 (GameSheet)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number: Article 1

Heading: Registration, Eligibility, General Rules

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number: C. page 44

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

CURRENT WORDING:

PROPOSED WORDING: CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH

Player and coach registration. All rosters must be made with the current version of the USA Hockey electronic registration system. Rosters for all levels of competition must be submitted by NOVEMBER 15 OF THE PLAYING YEAR. FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING TEAM ELIGIBILITY FOR STATE TOURNAMENT PLAY. ROSTERS MAY BE AMENDED UP UNTIL December 31.

Player and coach registration. All rosters must be made with the current version of the USA Hockey electronic registration system. Rosters for all levels of competition must be submitted **prior to games being played. The last date rosters can be submitted is** NOVEMBER 15 OF THE PLAYING YEAR, FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING TEAM ELIGIBILITY FOR STATE TOURNAMENT PLAY. ROSTERS MAY BE AMENDED UP UNTIL December 31.

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed): To ensure that all players and coaches are covered by USAH insurance.

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Robin Bilsborough Region 5 Director

DATE RECEIVED: 4/15/26 **PROPOSAL NUMBER:** 2026 R-50 (rost b4 games)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

PROPOSED RULE & REGULATION CHANGE, ADDITION OR DELETION

Article Number: 1

Heading: REGISTRATION, ELIGIBILITY, GENERAL RULES

Section, Sub-section, Paragraph, Page Number: I, p. 50

NOTE: Rule Changes are voted upon by the WAHA Board of Directors prior to the WAHA Annual Meeting. Rule Changes will be announced and copies provided to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

**PROPOSED WORDING:
CHANGES – BOLD, BLACK & UNDERLINED
DELETIONS – STRIKETHROUGH**

CURRENT WORDING:

See attached.

See attached.

REASON FOR PROPOSAL (attached extra sheets if needed):

See attached...top of p. 3

SUBMITTER, TITLE & ORGANIZATION: Ryan Blick, Fond du Lac Warbirds Girls Hockey Director

DATE RECEIVED: 4/15/26 **PROPOSAL NUMBER:** 2026 R-52 (season types)



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-52, p. 2

Current Wording

WAHA considers the “regular playing season” to begin on September 1 and continue through the end of the WAHA Youth/Girls State Tournaments in March. The summer program season will conclude the first Sunday in October.

Proposed Wording

Changes-Bold, Black & Underlined
Deletions- Strikethrough

WAHA considers the “regular playing season” to begin on September 1 and continue through the end of the WAHA Youth/Girls State Tournaments in March. The summer program season will conclude the first Sunday in October. **three types of Season Types, which are defined by the USA Hockey electronic registration system. The three season types are Regular, Spring/Summer, and Pre/Post.**

1. **Season Type Regular is defined by WAHA Full Season National & Non-National Bound Tier I Associations and Tier II Association programs**
 1. **Bylaw Article 4 defines WAHA Membership**
 2. **Article 6 defines Tier I Full Season Start and End Dates**
 3. **WAHA Tier II National & Non-National Bound Teams considers the regular playing season to begin on September 1st and continue through the end of the WAHA Youth State Tournaments, WAHA Girls State Tournaments, and/or USA Hockey Tier II National Tournament.**
2. **Season Type Spring/Summer is defined by WAHA Tier II Association programs formed between the end of the WAHA Youth State Tournament, WAHA Girls State Tournaments, and/or Article 6 for National Bound Tier I teams through the first Sunday (at 11:59pm) in October.**
 1. **Non-National Bound Tier I teams Spring/Summer start date will be upon the last scheduled practice and/or game.**
 2. **Age classification for Spring/Summer Season Types are Youth 6U-18U, Girls 6U-19U, and Adult.**
3. **Pre/Post is defined by National Bound Before & After Tier I and Tier II teams & Tier II Non-National Bound Teams.**
 1. **Article 7 defines Start and End Dates for Before & After Tier II National Bound Teams.**
 - i. **Article 7 defines age classifications.**
 2. **Article 6 defines Start and End Dates for Before & After Tier I National Bound**
 - i. **Article 6 defines age classifications**
 3. **Tier II Non-National Bound Teams shall be defined as Pre-Season Teams.**
 - i. **Pre-Season teams should register as a Pre/Post Non-National Bound Season Type on the USA Hockey Registry System.**
 - ii. **Pre-Season Teams shall commence on August 1st and end on the Sunday before WIAA Season Commences.**
 - iii. **Pre-Season Teams age classifications are Youth 14U-18U & Girls U14-U19.**
 - iv. **Youth 12U & Below & Girls 12U & Below teams are not permitted to be Pre/Post.**



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-52, p. 3

Reason For Proposal

Article 1, Section 1 (Page 50):

The three Season Types in the USA Hockey Registry are not aligned with the WAHA Annual Guide. This disconnect creates challenges in creating, modifying, and enforcing rules.

To resolve this, the Annual Guide must clearly define the three Season Types so they match the electronic registration system. Currently, the Guide does not specify:

- Season Type definitions
- Eligible age classifications
- Approved participation levels
- Start and end dates

This lack of clarity leads to inconsistent interpretation and application across associations.

The Guide does not define:

- Start dates for Spring/Summer Season
- Age classifications for Spring/Summer
- Definition of Pre/Post Season
- Which teams may participate in Pre/Post
- Age classifications for Pre/Post
- Start and end dates for Pre/Post

Pre/Post Season Type is the biggest area of addition to the rules

Defined as participation before and/or after the National Bound season for Tier I and Tier II teams, as well as Tier II Non-National Bound teams.

- Teams must designate National Bound or Non-National Bound when creating rosters
- National Bound designation is not required to use this Season Type

Eligible Teams Include:

- Team Wisconsin (TW) and WEHL National Bound teams
 - Examples: TW Boys 13O–U18, TW Girls 14U–19U, WEHL Boys 16U, WEHL Girls 14U–18U
- TW and WEHL Non-National Bound teams
 - Examples: WEHL Boys 14U & 18U, WEHL Girls 12U
- Non-National Bound Tier II fall teams
 - Examples: NAPHL 14U–18U teams (Janesville, Odessa, Windigo, Great Lakes) and association-based fall teams

Age Classifications for Season Type Pre/Post Season (Non–National Bound Teams)

Some teams register under the Pre/Post Season Type but are Non–National Bound, including:

- Youth WEHL 14U
- Youth WEHL 18U
- WEHL All-Star (Wisconsin Hockey Club)

If approved, the rule above allows any USA Hockey registered Non-National Bound Pre-Season team at the 14U level and above to play until the Sunday before the WIAA season begins.



Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

2026 R-52, p. 4

- Examples of these teams are Janesville Jets, Odessa Jackalopes, Chippewa Steel, Green Bay Bobcats and Great Lakes.
-

Why This Matters

Allowing all Tier II Non-National Bound 14U+ Pre-Season teams is important because WEHL and TW are currently the only playing options for WIAA 9th graders between October 5 and November 9. However, these programs cannot accommodate all players in the state.

1. Limited Access to WEHL and TW

- Not all players make these teams due to roster cuts.
- Under current rules, players cut from WEHL/TW can only play until October 4 if they join another team.
 - This creates unequal opportunities—players not selected lose access to play during a key time period.

2. Geographic Barriers

- Travel requirements make participation unrealistic for some players.
- Examples:
 - Superior players traveling to Eau Claire
 - Racine players traveling to Ozaukee
- Long weeknight travel (2+ hours) during the school year discourages participation.

3. Lack of Local Ice Availability

- Some rinks do not install ice until mid-October.
 - Some WIAA programs do not begin until early November with no access to Captains Ice or Pre-Season skates
 - Many players simply have no place to play during this gap.
-

This rule change:

- Clarifies season types, timelines, and age classifications within WAHA
- Ensures more equitable access to playing opportunities
- Supports players who cannot participate in WEHL or TW due to cuts, geography, or availability

Ultimately, it allows players and families to choose the option that best fits their situation during the pre-season window.

Thanks-

Ryan Blick

Fond du Lac Warbirds Girls Hockey Director