

NORTHERN ALBERTA INTERLOCK

Executive Memorandum

October 28, 2022

TO: All NAI Member Associations

RE: U9 Season

This memo is to give an update on the U9 plans and processes for the upcoming hockey season.

The U9 teams have been placed into three categories, Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3 based on placement by the local associations. A two-week season schedule will be released followed by the remainder of the schedule for the year. Please note, there are no playoffs in U9 and follows the U9 Pathway as per Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta.

There are several key points regarding U9 this season:

- Each team is targeted for approximately 20 games over the season. The season schedule will primarily be focused on travel reduction will providing a variety of opponents when able. This does not mean every team will have 20 games, the target is close to 20 games where possible due to travel.
- Groupings have been broken into geographical tiers. The tiers have been broken in a format that reduces travel but also considers the need for opponents for some associations.
- There will be cross-tier play for many teams, meaning, that although a team may be grouped in a “west” tier as an example, that team will play neighbours in a “central” tier as well. Again, the primary focus is the reduction of travel in the construction of the tiers.
- There are a few associations that are limited simply due to geographical location. Arranging opponents has been taken into consideration and these associations may be asked for ice that helps facilitate enhanced scheduling tactics, such as the use of doubleheader games so that an association only needs to travel once.
- The use of other enhanced scheduled tactics, such as doubleheader games, neutral sites, splitting larger teams for games and similar will be taken into consideration in scheduling when are where possible, subject to the needs identified in the U9 survey completed by the associations and the availability of ice submitted.

As a reminder, please note the following season schedule critical dates for the U9 Division:

Critical Season Item	Date
Pre-season (two-week schedules)	Friday, November 4, 2022, to Sunday, November 13, 2022
Fall Break	November 18-20, 2022 (no games scheduled)
Regular Season	November 25, 2022, to March 12, 2023
Christmas Break	Monday, December 19, 2022, to Thursday, January 5, 2023 (no games scheduled)
Winter Break	February 17-19, 2023 (No games scheduled)

Next Steps:

- **Please immediately advise, via email to karen@nainterlock.com if your U9 team is NOT ready yet to play commencing the November 4th weekend.**
- Watch for schedule releases. The schedule for November 4th to November 13th will be release in the next few days. It is anticipated that the remainder of the season schedule will be released no later than Wednesday, November 23rd, 2023.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the league.

Neil Rogers

Neil Rogers, President
Northern Alberta Interlock