



## 2023/2024 NIHL-Blackhawks Tournament Format



**Premier Select Levels in which 4 teams advance (10U, 12U and 14U PSL):** The top four teams will be seeded #1 - #4. The #1 seed will be paired with #4, and the #2 seed paired with #3. These pairings will play a best two-out-of-three game format, playing a game on Friday 2/9, on Saturday 2/10, and another (if needed) on Sunday 2/11. As each game must have a winner, any game may require sudden-death overtime(s). Once a team loses its second game, it is eliminated from the tournament, while the remaining team advances to the championship game on Sunday 2/18.

**Elite and Gold teams:** These levels will participate in the Gold-Elite format, which features a two-game series: The winning teams of the Gold-Elite two-game series will be determined by game points (2 pts/win, 1 pt /tie). If after the second game of the Gold-Elite two-game series the two teams have 2 game points each, a third “mini-game”, consisting of only one period of typical time, will be played immediately following the second game. This mini-game will NOT be a sudden-death format. As this mini-game is a completely separate game, any penalties from the second game do not carry over. If the mini-game ends in a tie, sudden death overtime period(s) will be played until a winner is determined. The winners of each Gold-Elite two-game series will advance to the championship games the next weekend.

At the 10U Gold and the 10U, 12U and 14U Elite levels, the two-game series will occur on Saturday 2/10 and Sunday 2/11. At the 12U and 14U Gold levels, the two-game series will occur on Saturday 2/17 and Sunday 2/18.

At the Elite and Gold 10U levels the top 4 teams will advance to the two-game series as seeds #1 - #4. Seed #1 will be matched with seed #4 in this two-game format, while seeds #2 and #3 will compete.

At the Elite and Gold 12U and 14U levels, the top 6 teams will advance as seeds #1 - #6. Seeds #3 - #6 will participate in a play-in game to determine who advances to the two-game series. These play-in games will consist of #3 vs. #6 and #4 vs. #5, and will be played on Friday, the day before the two-game series begins. The winners of these play-in games will advance to the two-game starting the next day. In the two-game series at these levels, the #1 seed will play the lowest viable seed winning a play-in game, while the #2 seed will play the highest viable seed.

**18 CJP teams:** The top 5 teams will advance as seeds #1 - #5. Seeds #4 and #5 will compete in a play-in game on Friday 2/9. The winner of that play-in game will assume the #4 seed and will advance to play the #1 seed in the Gold-Elite format (as described above) Saturday 2/10 and Sunday 2/11.

**16 CJP teams:** The top 2 teams will advance as seeds #1 and #2 directly to the championship games.

**Silver and Bronze teams:** Selected teams will participate in a single game elimination format. These teams will be seeded and play their first-round games at the home rink of the higher seed at a mutually agreed upon time and date from Tuesday 2/6 to Tuesday 2/13. Winners of those first-round games will advance to play in their quarter-final games at a predetermined host site on Saturday 2/17. Winners of the quarter-final games will advance to the semi-final games played at the same site on Sunday 2/18.

**Silver and Bronze teams (cont.):** Winners of the semi-final games will advance to the championship games the next weekend.

**Girls' teams:** Selected teams will participate in a single game elimination format. At most levels, teams will be seeded with the top four teams playing in a semi-final game on either Friday, 2/9, Saturday 2/10, or Sunday 2/11. At the 14U American level, teams will be seeded and some will play their quarter-final games at a predetermined host site on Friday 2/9 or Saturday 2/10. Winners of the quarter-final games will advance to the semi-final games played at the same site the next day. Winners of the semi-final games will advance to the championship games the next weekend.

### **10U levels:**

**10U Premier Select:** The top 4 teams will participate in the PSL format as seeds #1 - #4.

**10U Elite:** The top 4 teams will participate in the Gold-Elite format as seeds #1- #4.

**10U Gold:** The top 4 teams will participate in the Gold-Elite format as seeds #1- #4.

**10U Silver:** 9 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #9. The top 6 teams from Tier 1 will advance as seeds #1 - #6, the top 3 teams from Tier 2 as seeds #7 - #9. #1 - #7 will advance directly to the quarterfinal games, earning a first-round bye.

**10U Bronze:** 12 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #12. The top 6 teams from Tier 1 will advance as seeds #1 - #6, the top 4 teams from Tier 2 as seeds #7 - #10, and the top 2 teams from Tier 3 will advance as seeds #11 and #12. Seeds #1 - #4 will advance directly to the quarterfinal games, earning a first-round bye.

**10U Girls:** 4 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #4.

### **12U levels:**

**12U Premier Select:** The top 4 teams will participate in the PSL format as seeds #1 - #4.

**12U Elite:** The top 6 teams will participate in the Gold-Elite format as seeds #1- #6.

**12U Gold:** The top 6 teams will participate in the Gold-Elite format as seeds #1- #6.

**12U Silver:** 16 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #16. The top 8 teams from Tier 1 will advance as seeds #1 - #8 and the top 5 teams from Tier 2 as seeds #9 - #13, and the top 3 teams from Tier 3 as seeds #14 - #16. All teams will play a first-round game.

**12U Bronze:** 8 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #8. The top 6 teams from Tier 1 will advance as seeds #1 - #6 and the top 2 teams from Tier 2 as seeds #7 and #8. All 8 seeds will advance directly to the quarterfinal games.

**12U Girls National:** The top 4 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #4. All seeds will advance directly to the semifinal games.

### **12U levels (cont.)**

**12U Girls American:** The top 4 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #4. All seeds will advance directly to the semifinal games.

### **14U levels:**

**14U Premier Select:** The top 4 teams will participate in the PSL format as seeds #1 - #4.

**14U Elite:** The top 6 teams will participate in the Gold-Elite format as seeds #1- #6.

**14U Gold:** The top 6 teams will participate in the Gold-Elite format as seeds #1- #6.

**14U Silver:** 9 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #9. The top 6 teams from Tier 1 will advance as seeds #1 - #6, the top 3 teams from Tier 2 as seeds #7 - #9. Seeds #1 - #7 will advance directly to the quarterfinal games, earning a first-round bye.

**14U Bronze:** The top 6 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #6. Seeds #1 and #2 will advance directly to the semifinal games, earning a quarterfinal bye.

**14U Girls National:** The top 4 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #4. All seeds will advance directly to the semifinal games.

**14U Girls American:** 6 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #6. Seeds #1 and #2 will advance directly to the semifinal games, earning a quarterfinal bye.

### **16U CJP and 18U CJP levels:**

**16U:** The top 2 teams will advance directly to the championship games.

**18U:** The top 5 teams will participate in the Gold-Elite format as seeds #1 - #5.

### **Girls' 16/19U level:**

**16/19U Girls National:** The top 4 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #4. All seeds will advance directly to the semifinal games.

**16/19U Girls American:** The top 4 teams will advance to a single game elimination format as seeds #1 - #4. All seeds will advance directly to the semifinal games.