

## **Hampstead & Westminster Hockey Club**

Newsletter June 2026

*Keeping Vice Presidents and Friends in the know*

### **Welcome**

This is the forty seventh Newsletter in the current format. It covers the end of the 2025-26 season. It has been a protracted (and disjointed) season for the top teams, following the resumption of the Premier Division matches in mid March 2026, a break of three and a half months. This partially explains the late delivery of this Newsletter. Nonetheless, it has been another remarkably successful season for the club on several levels, with the women's retention of the European Trophy and the Under 18 team again victorious in the Tier 1 National Cup. Youth players have continued to make their mark in the National League Premier Division teams. The men's 2<sup>nd</sup> XI have broken new ground, winning the championship of the East Conference and will now play in National League Division One South.

### **Highlights**

In the usual tabloid format, the highlights of the spring and early summer (and in no particular order) are:

- The Women's 1<sup>st</sup> XI retains the European Trophy in Vienna and Holly Hunt is awarded Player of the Tournament
- The Women's 1<sup>st</sup> XI finishes in second place in the Premier Division and third in the Championship Play Offs
- The Men's 1<sup>st</sup> XI finishes fourth in the Premier Division and progresses to the Play Offs, which end in a 2-2 draw for third place with Surbiton, who win the shoot out
- The Women's 1<sup>st</sup> XI field three youth players in a Premier Division match at Reading
- Matt Guise-Brown's goals help propel the Men's 2<sup>nd</sup> XI to promotion to National League South
- The Women's 2<sup>nd</sup> XI finish fourth in the National League Conference East
- The Under 18 Boys team defeats Repton School to win a consecutive National Tier 1 Cup
- Hampstead takes part in the Under 19 European Hockey Clubs Organisation (EHCO) tournament for the first time
- Damon Steffens remains the second highest goalscoring record in the Men's Premier Division (but will now be returning to Melbourne)
- Lucy Hyams and Emily Rowlands retire from 1<sup>st</sup> XI hockey, while Lauren Hunt returns to play for Bowdon next season
- Roger Hunt steps down from management duties with the Women's 1<sup>st</sup> XI
- The Men's indoor team hold on to remain in the Premier Division
- Rupert Shipperley announces his retirement from International hockey
- With the aid of The Hockey Museum, a tribute is paid to the late Suki Rao
- The first award is made of the Chris Elliott trophy
- England Hockey announces its proposals for minimum operating standards for the Premier and Division One of the National League for the start of the 2027-28 season

### **Tributes**

#### **Suki Rao**

Sukhdev (Sukhi) Singh Rao was a pioneering figure in London club hockey and a central presence in the development of the game among Britain's South Asian community. He died on 12 April 2026 at the age of 92. His funeral was held on 11 May 2026 at Loughborough Crematorium.

Born in Mombasa on 10 September 1933, he moved to the United Kingdom in 1954 and quickly established himself in hockey. A composed and reliable full back, noted for his positional awareness and reading of the game, he played for Brighton Students between 1954 and 1958, captaining the side in the 1957–58 season and represented Brighton Technical College.



His senior club career took him through Slough Hockey Club (1964-1968), Teddington Hockey Club (1968-1970) and Bedfordshire Eagles (1970-1971), before he joined Hampstead on 8 October 1971.



Slough Hockey Club 1968 (Sukhdev Rao, captain, standing first right).  
Photograph: Ian Mitchell / Sikhs in Hockey

At Hampstead, he was more widely known as Suki. He became a key figure in the 1st XI, captaining the side for two successive seasons (1972-73 and 1973-74) during a formative period in the London Hockey League. He was part of the generation of players who helped define the early character and standards of the new League. He continued to represent Hampstead's 1st XI until the 1976-77 season and latterly played in the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI.

The 1973-74 season witnessed an influx of Asians at Hampstead. Harvinderpal Sibia, who had represented Kenya at the Munich Olympic Games in 1972, as well as the 1971 World Cup in Barcelona 1971 and in Amsterdam in 1973, joined the Club, as did two other Kenyans, Gurmulk Soor and Tochi Panesar.

The London Indians v Middlesex team sheet for the match on 20 October 1973 records Suki Rao (captain), Gurmulk Soor (Hampstead), Suti Khehar (Slough) and Jas Missan (Spencer) playing for London Indians and Harvinderpal Sibia (Hampstead) and Iky Kullar (London University) playing for Middlesex.

The London Indians v England team sheet for the match on 23 March 1974 at Northampton College included Suki (as captain), Gurmulk Soor and Harvinderpal Sibia playing for London Indians.

Hampstead's record in the first years of the London League was poor. Club morale was low. In June 1973, under President Kip Stafford a sub committee was proposed as a smaller group to run the Club's hockey activities, releasing the General Committee and the Secretary of burdensome work, leaving them to concentrate on administration. The Sub-Committee was approved in principle on 16 July 1973 and it was agreed that it should plan its own activities under the overall guidance of Suki and Mike Patton of the 1<sup>st</sup> XI.

Under Suki's leadership, the 1<sup>st</sup> XI results suddenly improved. They were in seventh place in mid-November 1973 after wins against Cambridge University and Maidenhead and a 1-1 draw with Cheam, where "timely tackles by Mills, Rao and Patton saved the day". After a 2-0 defeat of London University (in which the *Ham & High* reckoned "Hampstead were on the defensive for two-thirds of the game but held out mainly due to the fine work from veteran skipper Rao and left half Mike Patton") and a goalless draw with last year's national club champions, Hounslow, Hampstead moved to sixth.

This was followed by the 2-2 draw with Spencer, "which wrecked league leaders Spencer's record run of seven successive wins". Suki had a goal disallowed and Madrira blazed a late shot over the crossbar that would have sealed a famous win. With promoted Richard Chapman and Sealey "teaming up competently with Rao and Patton" and employing a four man diagonal defence that "absorbed continuous waves of attack", Hampstead held on to defeat Oxford University 1-0 in the Parks. Sixth place was maintained until the new year.

In early January, four points from six at a *double-header* weekend saw a drop to seventh. A goalless draw with Dulwich provided evidence of the six prior weeks without a competitive outing. The team struggled to deal with the pace of the game. On the Sunday, Hampstead beat a strong Teddington side 2-1. The *Hornsey Journal* said that Hampstead "turned on a wonderful display of attacking hockey". Viji Vijendren opened the scoring. After an equaliser from a short corner and as both sides pressed for a winner, "Mills, Patton and Rao made desperate saves in the Hampstead circle". The winning goal (voted by Hampstead supporters as the best of the season) was scored by Alan Kenyon, to leave Hampstead with a thirteenth successive match without defeat.

Hampstead were placed eighth on 10 February 1974 after their match against fifth placed Surbiton was rained off. Reading then beat them 1-2 on the shale pitch at Creighton North School. The *Ham & High* commented that, "all-weather proved to be somewhat flattering of the qualities of the pitch, as the weekend's heavy rain left it resembling Margate beach with the tide out." A misunderstanding between (or mistakes, to some) by Suki and Harvinder Sibi within thirty seconds of the start gave Reading their opening goal. Hampstead's tactics were ill-suited to the playing surface, "they tried a close, short passing Indian type of game with ball pushed and shuffled around." In spite of a change in position for newly acquired West German international Nicko Giercke and good chances created by

Norman Borrett, "Hampstead's finishing was desperately poor". Norman did score "when he shovelled in a rebound from the goalkeeper but that and ten short corners were Hampstead's only reward". Sunday's game against league leaders, Southgate, was called off because of the rain.

Form faltered with a 1-2 loss to Beckenham, where the winner's Paul Svehlik, then Great Britain's penalty corner specialist, rifled two shots past Andy Gregory in goal. On 22 February 1974, the team had dropped to tenth in the League. Viji was ordered off for dissent with ten minutes left against Guildford in a 1-1 draw on the Imperial College pitch at Harlington. Giercke missed a penalty stroke and Norman Borrett had a goal chalked off. Tochi Panesar scored Hampstead's goal but was reckoned by the *Hornsey Journal* to be "half-fit". The *Ham & High's* reported awarded Norman the goal instead.

Next week, Harvinder Sibia was ordered off against Bromley for retaliation, after a bad obstruction, in a 1-2 loss to Bromley. The next opponents were Slough, with three Great Britain players. The *Hornsey Journal* anticipated that Hampstead would field "a new forward line in a bid to halt their recent slide." Things started badly when Harvinder Sibia again failed to appear on time. Norman Borrett said, "It would seem that the tolerance of skipper Suki Rao has been tested for the last time." Tochi Panesar deputised and the forward line was considerably adjusted. Having pulled the game back to 1-1 after Norman Borrett's goal, the ball was pushed away by Hampstead after a free hit had been awarded and the resulting penalty corner was put away. A late penalty stroke, awarded when stand-in 'keeper David Shah played the ball without his stick, gave Slough their 3-1 win. Norman added, "Hampstead have given goals away at "penalty" situations in the last five games...and this is one of the main reasons for their disappointing recent performances."

Hampstead then drew 1-1 with star-studded Blackheath. "Only one win out of six" was the headline in the *Hornsey Journal*. The *Ham & High* instead concentrated on Suki's adoption of set piece responsibility, taking over from Alan Mills, "who had collected only a handful of goals in an experimental period." The newspaper added, "Suki Rao is a hit again as a short corner marksman and now Hampstead are poised for a climactic place in London's Top Ten. It paid off with a deserved equaliser ten minutes from time". Suki said that he would carry on taking them "and if we win our last two games against Richmond and Mid-Surrey we can wind up in seventh place in the League."

However, in only the second game of the year at Hornsey and without Norman Borrett and Nico Giercke, Hampstead lost 0-1 to Richmond, not helped when centre half Ganesh Mac Madrira was sent off for retaliation after a foul. The *Ham & High* concluded, "Madrira's exit probably cost Hampstead the match and the chance of finishing in the top ten of the London League. At one time Hampstead were pressing for the first three places but they have wilted in a terrible run of six games without a win."

The League programme concluded with a 4-2 win against Mid-Surrey. Hampstead "ended up in the top half of the League, their best position for several years," winning eleven, drawing six and losing seven.

The work of the Committee was recognised at the AGM held on 24 March 1974. Its organisation of the playing activities of the Club was reported to have been a significant achievement and had much improved selection procedures. Suki Rao reported the completion of the Club's best season for several years with good results throughout the teams. With a little greater luck both the 1<sup>st</sup> XI and 2<sup>nd</sup> XIs might have ended the season in the top four of their respective London Leagues.

At the AGM on 13 May 1975, in his annual report retiring 1<sup>st</sup> XI captain, Mike Patton thanked Suki for his contribution and effort during the 1973-74 and most of the 1974-75 seasons. He hoped that in the coming season the Club would "bring itself together instead of breaking into splinter groups..."

Standards had to improve and selfish attitudes must be set aside". The Minutes record that those present unanimously applauded these sentiments.

Suki then played for Cambridge City between 1978 and 1981. His influence extended significantly through his long association with the London Indians Hockey Club, for whom he played from 1963 to 2000 and captained between 1968 and 1974. He helped establish the side as a highly competitive and respected team, often facing county and international opposition.

Contemporary accounts from within the Cambridge club's history describe him as a hard-working leader, who set exceptionally high standards and was widely admired. Under his captaincy, selection for London Indians was regarded as an honour, reflecting the strength and reputation of the side during its formative years. Contemporary reports in *The Times* from the period reflect the growing profile and competitiveness of the London Hockey League, as well as the standing of London Indians under Rao's captaincy,

He was also the founder, organiser and captain of Kijana Hockey Club, a touring side established in 1958. Named after the Swahili word for "youth," Kijana provided opportunities for promising young players, many of whom progressed to county and international hockey. The team toured extensively across England and Europe, reflecting Suki's commitment to developing the next generation of players.



Kijana Hockey Club at Easter Festival in Paignton, Devon 1958 (Sukhdev Rao, captain, standing second from left).

Photograph: John Finnemore / Sikhs in Hockey

Suki was widely respected across the hockey community. His commitment extended far beyond the pitch. He was among the pioneers who helped establish an Asian-influenced style of play in UK hockey during the 1960s and 1970s, contributing to the evolution and diversity of the modern game. His career forms part of the wider documented history of Sikh participation in hockey in England, reflecting the growing influence of players from East Africa and the Indian diaspora during this period.

Tochi Panesar recalled Sukhi Rao with affection, "Sukhi had hockey in his blood and his life always revolved round hockey. He was my captain at Hampstead in the mid-1970s as well as with the majestic London Indians, for whom his dedication was immense. I always tried to stay in contact with Sukhi and last met him in November 2021 when Barford Tigers Hockey Club acknowledged London Indians in their match programme."

## Chris Elliott

Chris's funeral was held in January 2026 in North London. A good number of club blazers were on display.



## Trophy

As the recipient was unable to attend the Club's annual dinner, where the committee would have presented a new annual trophy to him, it fell, instead, to Richard Chapman to deputise at a Pistons' match in early June 2026.

Richard said that it was a new annual trophy. This would be the first name engraved, which the club had commissioned in memory of Chris, a stalwart of the club.

"2025 was not a great year in that respect for Southgate HC either because they lost a very similar stalwart too, in John Willmott. John and Chris were kindred spirits, in love with hockey, not as good at it as some but the backbone of organisation and generators of enthusiasm for ventures other than those in the routine club season. I suspect Willmott's dress sense would have been considered the more outrageous although Chris did commission the stand-out Hampstead touring blazers.

The citation on the award, I paraphrase, says it is given to somebody who has made a notable contribution to vets/masters hockey on and off the field. Chris Elliott certainly did that and if you were imbedded in that generation, and a few of us here tonight were, you know his efforts were legendary.

Chris came on a free transfer to Hampstead from Brentwood in the 1980s and he quickly started to run our vets hockey. One of his first involvements was in the 1986 Vets World Cup in London, where we hosted a satellite group of teams at Tivoli Road. I remember Zimbabwe being there but also Malaysia and as a thank you from the Malaysian players we were invited to the next edition in Kuala Lumpur in 1990. I suspect that was the highlight of Chris's playing career because we only narrowly lost in the final to the Dutch and Chris came home with a silver medal round his neck.

That was the start of an epic and very successful touring programme organised by Chris whereby we used to go to Europe in Spring and Autumn where we played in tournaments in Berlin, in Courtrai and Brussels in Belgium, in Lyon, Bordeaux and Paris-St-Germain in France, in Lisbon, in Gibraltar and not forgetting one memorable trip (and I wasn't even there) to Barbados. Back in the UK I also remember us driving round the M25 on many Wednesday nights to play Vets hockey around the Orpington area

for which fixtured Chris's little black book (really a scrappy bit of paper with 'phone numbers) came into its own. Anybody who has ever organised *ad hoc* hockey fixtures will recognise the difficulty of herding cats to make a team - especially goalkeepers and often umpires, too.

Our hero tonight Chris Somes-Charlton, who has taken over CAE's mantle to great effect and has engendered great team spirit in Hampstead's Grand Masters team, as well as organising and leading his troops abroad in the same tradition. Again, many of you will know the enormous time and effort that goes into such endeavours. There could not be a more deserving recipient of this award."

Richard then asked Melissa, Chris Elliott's daughter, to present the trophy.

## Indoor Hockey

### Men

The Premier Division, Division One and Division Two North & South leagues began on 10-11 January 2026, at several venues across the country.

In the Premier Division, at Whitgift School, having called on seasoned campaigners for the second weekend, a vital draw in the first game (and an equaliser in the 35<sup>th</sup> minute from Rhys Bradshaw) on the final day secured Hampstead's place in the Premier Division, alongside a favourable goal difference. That meant relegation for Sevenoaks and Southgate.

10 January 2026      Surbiton 6 Hampstead 3  
                                  Hampstead 2 Old Georgians 5  
 11 January 2026      Hampstead 8 East Grinstead 5  
                                  Southgate 5 Hampstead 4  
 17 January 2026      Wimbledon 8 Hampstead 1  
                                  Hampstead 2 Oxted 6  
 18 January 2026      Hampstead 4 Sevenoaks 4  
                                  Holcombe 4 Hampstead 2

Old Georgians	8	8	0	0	29	24
Surbiton	8	6	1	1	18	19
Wimbledon	8	6	0	2	17	18
Oxted	8	5	0	3	10	15
Holcombe	8	4	0	4	4	12
East Grinstead	8	2	1	5	-4	7
<b>Hampstead</b>	8	1	1	6	-17	4
Sevenoaks	8	1	1	6	-24	4
Southgate	8	1	0	7	-33	3

### Squad

Lekan Ogunlana (GK); Rhys Bradshaw, Sam French, Hywel Jones, Joe Sharp, Josh Kelly, Jared Panchia, Nick Steffens, Matt Richards, Ali Bray, Thies Schlueter and Lucas Jaehnig

### Women

The Women decided to tackle national level six-a-side competition this season and had a resounding success, winning the regional leagues and progressing to the Division Two South title at Canterbury on 10-11 January 2026.

Hampstead 4 Marlow 2  
 Hampstead 12 Maidstone 1

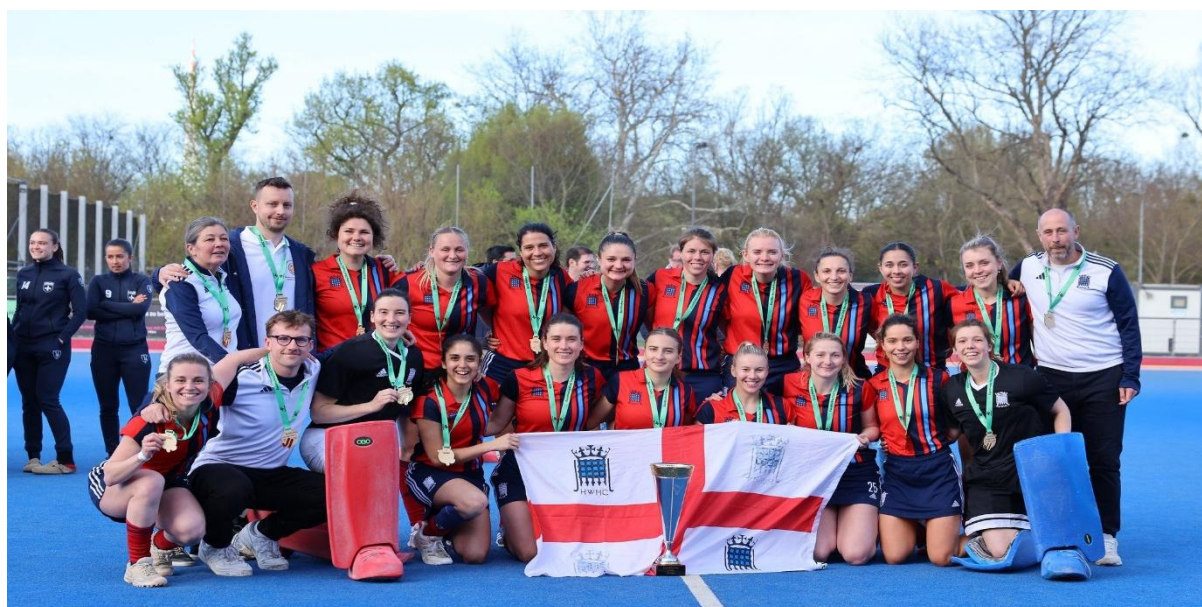
Hampstead 5 Southgate 2  
 Old Georgians 1 Hampstead 1  
 Firebrands 1 Hampstead 3

<b>Hampstead</b>	5	4	1	0	18	13
Southgate	5	4	0	1	20	12
Old Georgians	5	3	1	1	15	10
Bristol Firebrands	5	2	0	3	8	6
Marlow	5	1	0	4	-7	3
Maidstone	5	0	0	5	-54	0

### Squad

Victoria Drews (GK); Saar de Breij, Phoebe Willars, Sofia Martin, Philippa Lewis, Esme Burge (captain), Lauren Hunt, Beth Halbard and Caoimhe Byrne

### European Hockey



Hampstead's women secured back-to-back wins at the EuroHockey Club Trophy 1 in Austria during the Easter weekend.

#### Pool A

MSC Sumchanka	3	3	0	0	7	15
Saint Germain	3	2	0	1	4	11
Lille	3	1	0	2	-1	7
S G Amsicora (ITA)	3	0	0	0	-10	1

#### Pool B

<b>Hampstead</b>	3	3	0	0	7	15
AHTC Wien	3	1	1	1	0	8
Loreto (IRE)	3	1	1	1	0	8
TJ Plzeň-Utice (CZE)	3	0	0	0	-7	2

Hampstead 4 Plzeň 0                      Greenwood L Hunt Leigh Ledesma  
 Loreto 1 AHTC Wien  
 Loreto 0 Hampstead 2                      H Hunt, Burge (PS)  
 Plzeň 1 AHTC Wien 2  
 Plzeň 0 Loreto 2  
 Hampstead 2 AHTC Wien 1                H Hunt Burge

*Ranking matches*

7/8: S G Amisora 3 TJ Plzeň-Utice 2

5/6: Lille 2 Loreto 1

Bronze: St Germain 1 AHTC Wien 0

Final: MSC Sumchanka 2 Hampstead 3                      Hamilton Lench L Hunt

The Player of the Tournament was awarded to Holly Hunt, who shared her experience of the win. "It was a great experience out in Vienna with Hampstead & Westminster HC in the EuroHockey Club Trophy. We were incredibly excited and hopeful to have a repeat of the 2025 tournament, where we came away winners. We had a fantastic group of 50+ friends and family that travelled out to Vienna to watch us, and we were very keen to make them proud and bring home the trophy for them too. We couldn't have made it to Vienna without the support of the HWHC family, and we are all so very grateful for the generosity of the club members".

"It was a good challenge to play against different styles of hockey as we faced teams from Austria, Czech Republic, Ireland & Ukraine. Despite the intense schedule of four games in four days, we were able to pull together and produce the performances required to go on and win the tournament once again. The final was closely fought against Sumchanka of Ukraine, but thanks to goals from Tyler Lench, Lauren Hunt and Liv Hamilton, we came out on top and were eventual winners. It was a real squad effort to get over the line, as we showed the strength in depth of our squad and expert game management implemented by our coaches Dave Cooper and Nate Webster".

"To win this tournament back-to-back is an amazing achievement for our club, and shows the dominance of English teams in this competition. This is also reflected by the fact that Surbiton won the tournament in 2024. I feel incredibly honoured to have been able to represent Hampstead & Westminster on the European stage and hope that we can continue to build on our victory throughout the final phase of our club season".

"As a squad, winning the Club Trophy in Vienna has definitely increased our desire to get to, and win, the England Hockey League Finals. The hunger within the group to make the top level of European hockey has never been higher and we are ready to give the next three matches everything we've got.

"Thank you to AHTC Wien for their hospitality and organisation, and thank you again to everyone at Hampstead & Westminster HC who helped us get to the EuroHockey Club Trophy and for all of your amazing support!"

**Trophy I Men**

*Pool A*

Watsonians	3	3	0	0	5	15
SV Arminen (AUT)	3	2	0	1	2	11
WKS Grunwald Poznan (POL)	3	1	0	2	-3	7
TJ Plzeň-Utice (CZE)	3	0	0	3	-4	3

### Pool B

Cardiff & Met	3	3	0	0	14	15
Lisnagarvey	3	2	0	1	15	11
AD Lousada (POR)	3	0	1	2	-7	2
OKS SHVSM Vinnitsa (UKR)	3	0	1	2	-22	2

### Ranking Matches

7/8: TJ Plzeň-Utice 3 OKS SHVSM Vinnitsa 0

5/6: WKS Grunwald Poznan 4 AD Lousada 4 (3-2 shoot out)

Bronze: SV Arminen 2 Lisnagarvey 5

Final Watsonians 0 Cardiff & Met 2

### Other European Hockey

Other English teams were competing in Europe at Easter. After their victory in the England Hockey League last year, Reading HC's women stepped into European club hockey in the Euro Hockey League Women's Final 12. In the men's game attention was focused on the Netherlands, where the Euro Hockey League Men's Final 8 took place. Old Georgians HC and Surbiton HC were taking part in the Final 8. Both sides had been dominant in domestic competition and were eager to translate that success on to the European stage. Old Georgians had a memorable run in the opening stages of the EHL season. They reached the Final 8 after a dramatic win on the final day of the knockout round in October 2025, when they defeated HC Bloemendaal, six-time EHL champions, 3-1 in a shoot-out .

### Euro Hockey League FINAL8

Old Georgians 1 Gantoise HC 3

Surbiton 1 Real Club de Campo 3

AH&BC 4 Hamburger Polo Club 1

SV Kampong 4 Crefelder HTC 4 (5-4 s/o)

Surbiton 1 OG 1 (1-2 s/o)

### Euro Hockey League FINAL4

AH&BC Amsterdam 2 SV Kampong 3

Real Club de Campo 3 Gantoise HC 3

Hamburger Polo Club 5 Crefelder HTC 4

Bronze: Campo 2 AH&BC 2 (3-4 shoot out)

Final: Gantoise 2 SV Kampong 3

**Final Standings:** 1 S V Kampong; 2 Gantoise; 3 AH&BC Amsterdam; 4 Real Club de Campo; 5= OG; 5= Hamburger Polo Club; 7= Crefelder HTC; 7= Surbiton

### For the future

Euro Hockey intends to bring the Finals arrangements for men in line with the women's. The men's finals will change to FINAL12, in line with the Women. They are proposed for 24-29 March 2027 (ie Wednesday to Monday). The number of men's teams given a bye will increase from four to eight, meaning for England, its top two are given a bye. The third ranked English team, Wimbledon, will play in the re-named EHL Round 1, in four pools of three teams over three days, from 9-11 October 2026.

They will be joined by the third ranking teams of the Netherlands and Belgium, the second ranked teams of Germany, Spain and France and the qualifiers from France, Ireland, Scotland, Austria and Czechia (plus one other to be announced). The two French teams will not be allowed in the same pool. The eight byes (to March 2027) will be awarded to the top two teams from the Netherlands, Belgium and England (Surbiton and OG) and the top teams from Spain and Germany.

Euro Hockey may want to use two pitches, leaving the second without video referral but this is likely to affect only the ninth to twelfth ranking matches.

## Outdoor Domestic Hockey

### Women

#### Premier Division

The 1<sup>st</sup> XI ended another successful season by winning to the Play offs at Surbiton in May 2026. They ended the top six in second place, with three defeats over all, perhaps running out of steam in the latter parts of the long season, shown in the loss to Wimbledon in the play offs, a team they had beaten narrowly earlier in the Top Six match.

#### Top 6

Reading 2 Hampstead 2	Lench (2)
Surbiton 5 Hampstead 1	Hamilton
Hampstead 1 Wimbledon 0	L Hunt
East Grinstead 0 Hampstead 1	Hyams
Hampstead 3 Durham University 2	Lench H Hunt Greenwood

[results are added to the league tables]

Surbiton	16	14	2	0	61	15	46	44
<b>Hampstead</b>	16	11	2	3	38	19	19	35
East Grinstead	16	9	2	5	31	30	1	29
Wimbledon	16	8	4	4	30	14	16	28
Reading	16	6	4	6	27	33	4	22
Durham University	16	6	0	10	36	34	2	18

Hampstead thereby earned three home matches in the Top Eight competition.

#### Top 8

[new league tables begin afresh, in two pools]

##### Pool B

Hampstead 4 Durham University 2	Tench Leigh Greenwood H Hunt
Hampstead 3 Birmingham University 0	Ledesma (2) Hamilton
Hampstead 3 East Grinstead 1	Ledesma de Breij Martin

##### Pool B Table

<b>Hampstead</b>	3	3	0	0	10	3	7	9
Durham University	3	2	0	1	6	7	-1	5
University of Birmingham	3	1	0	2	4	6	-2	4
East Grinstead	3	0	0	3	5	9	-4	0

##### Pool A Table

Surbiton	3	3	0	0	12	1	11	9
Wimbledon	3	2	0	1	3	5	-2	6

Loughborough Students	3	1	0	2	3	3	0	3
Reading	3	0	0	3	2	11	-9	0

The top two in each pool progress to the Play Offs

#### *Play Offs*

Hampstead 0 Wimbledon 2

Hampstead 1 Durham University 0 Hyams

Squad: Victoria Drew (GK), Rachel Greenwood, Olivia Hamilton, Phoebe Willars, Tyler Lench, Jane Kilpatrick, Sofia Martin, Catherine Ledesma, Phillipa Lewis, Emily Rowlands, Joanna Leigh, Holly Hunt, Lucy Hyams, Esme Burge (captain), Caoimhe Byrne and Gabriella Giles

Elsewhere in the Premier Division

#### *Lower Six Table*

University of Birmingham	16	7	3	6	36	31	5	24
Loughborough Students	16	6	4	6	28	32	-4	22
Bowdon	16	5	3	8	21	30	-9	18
University of Nottingham	16	4	3	9	21	53	-32	15
Clifton Robinsons	16	4	2	10	23	34	-11	14
Barnes	16	1	1	14	16	53	-37	4

University of Birmingham and Loughborough Students take part in the Top 8 competition. The remainder take part in the relegation Play offs, with league points still accumulating.

#### *Relegation Play Offs*

Bowdon	19	5	5	9	25	36	-11	20
University of Nottingham	19	5	4	10	27	60	-33	19
Clifton Robinsons	19	5	3	11	32	42	-10	18
Barnes	19	3	1	15	25	60	-35	10

Clifton Robinsons and Barnes are relegated to Division One

#### **Conference East [2<sup>nd</sup> XI]**

##### *Second part of the season*

Hampstead 1 Old Georgians 0	Greenwood
Spencer 1 Hampstead 2	Clark Eggink
Hampstead 2 Barnes 1	Eggink Summers
Wimbledon 3 Hampstead 2	Clark Davison
Old Loughtonians 1 Hampstead 0	
Hampstead 5 Canterbury 1	Davison Clark (2) Summers Greenwood
Hampstead 3 London Wayfarers 4	Greenwood Halbard Wilks
Guildford 1 Hampstead 0	
Hampstead 1 Wapping 1	Summers

Old Loughtonians	18	12	2	4	38	19	19	38
Old Georgians	18	12	2	4	31	17	14	38
<b>Hampstead 2</b>	18	10	2	6	38	23	15	32
Spencer	18	9	4	5	37	25	12	31
London Wayfarers	18	7	6	5	29	28	1	27
Canterbury	18	6	4	8	24	34	-10	22

Wimbledon 2	18	5	4	9	27	32	-5	19
Barnes 2	18	5	4	9	24	37	-13	19
Guildford 2	18	5	3	10	24	33	-9	18
Wapping	18	0	7	11	13	37	-24	7

### Elsewhere in the Women's National League

Division 1 North	Buckingham win on goal difference from Gloucester City
Division 1 South	Teddington are champions by nine points
Conference West	Team Bath Buccaneers take top spot from Trojans
Conference Midlands	Leicester City are promoted, winning by five points
Conference North	Bowdon's 2 <sup>nd</sup> XI gain promotion, with Alderley Edge in second place

### Men

#### Premier Division

##### Top 6

Old Georgians 4	Hampstead 1	Panchia
Hampstead 1	Surbiton 4	Shipperley
Hampstead 4	Holcombe 1	D Steffens (3)
Oxted 3	Hampstead 4	Foster Cross Gleeson D Steffens
Wimbledon 4	Hampstead 1	Cross

Surbiton	16	16	0	0	78	17	61	48
Wimbledon	16	11	3	2	49	26	23	36
Old Georgians	16	10	2	4	67	17	50	32
<b>Hampstead</b>	16	9	3	4	55	35	20	30
Holcombe	16	8	1	7	54	41	13	25
Oxted	16	3	4	9	36	66	-29	13

##### Lower Six

East Grinstead	16	6	5	5	38	51	-13	23
Cardiff & Met	16	5	2	9	33	50	-17	17
Reading	16	4	3	9	33	52	-19	15
Southgate	16	3	5	8	19	49	-30	14
Beeston	16	3	2	11	25	48	-23	11
Brooklands MU	16	1	4	11	28	64	-36	7

##### Top 8

Hampstead 5	Cardiff & Met 1	French (2)
Hampstead 5	Holcombe 3	Foster Cross D Steffens
Surbiton 10	Hampstead 0	Oates Morgan (2) D Steffens (2)

##### Pool A

Surbiton	3	3	0	0	24	2	22	9
<b>Hampstead</b>	3	2	0	1	10	14	-4	6
Holcombe	3	1	0	2	7	15	-8	2
Cardiff & Met	3	0	0	3	3	13	-10	1

##### Pool B

Old Georgians	3	3	0	0	19	2	17	9
Wimbledon	3	2	0	1	13	8	5	6
East Grinstead	3	1	0	2	4	12	-8	3

Oxted	3	0	0	3	4	18	-14	0
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### *Play Offs*

Old Georgians 3 Hampstead 1	French
Surbiton 2 Hampstead 2 (3-1 s/out)	Jones French

### *Relegation Play Offs*

Reading	19	5	4	10	40	59	-19	19
Beeston	19	5	3	11	33	52	-19	18
Southgate	19	1	6	12	35	72	-37	16
Brooklands MU	19	1	6	12	35	72	-37	9

This was a good season for Hampstead, bolstered by the goals of Damon Steffens and absence of long term injuries. Sam French returned to the team after injury (and from a break in Australia) and was soon among the goal scorers. The highlights of the second part of the season were the defeats of Holcombe, particularly at home in the Top Eight, for which Holcombe had gone far to prepare. They booked a training slot at Paddington Recreation Ground on the Thursday preceding the match to familiarise themselves with the conditions. In the Top Six, it was much as before, taking on the top three teams and losing out but more narrowly than the scorelines might suggest. All said, to have won points against the top five teams was a significant improvement for the team. After four years, Ashleigh Abbott has resigned as physiotherapist, with pressures on her available time, which she combined with her role with the GB Elite Development Programme squad.

Squad: Lekan Ogunlana (GK) Kevin O’Dea, Damon Steffens. James Oates, Tim Cross, Rupert Shipperley (captain) Rhys Bradshaw, Sam French, Hywel Jones, Toby Vaughan, Jared Panchia, Micheal Robson Matt Richards, Archie Foster, Karan Sofat, Robbie Gleeson and Jake Glew.

The story of the end of this season’s Premier Division has to be the remarkable turn around by Beeston to retain their position for next season. They began 2026 with a win in Cardiff, drew with Southgate and then defeated Brooklands 3-2 and Reading 4-1, before a defeat 3-4 away to East Grinstead. They eclipsed Southgate who are relegated to the Division One South (and whose place is taken by the University of Exeter). Southgate suffered too many draws and were beaten 1-5 by Reading in the final game of the main season. Their 3-3 draw with Brooklands in the last of the relegation play offs sealed their fate, coming back from 1-3 down but they were unable to score a winner (although their adverse goal difference would not have guaranteed them survival).

Surbiton remained undefeated in Divisional play and were frustrated to meet a focused Wimbledon in the Play Offs and lost 2-4. There remained a doubt over their inclusion of a 2<sup>nd</sup> XI player in one match that was expected to cost them a potential fine or points’ deduction but any suggestion of this was reportedly dismissed on legal advice.

### **Conference East [2<sup>nd</sup> XI]**

#### ***Second part of the season***

Hampstead 5 London Wayfarers 1	M Guise-Brown (3) French (2)
Wimbledon 2 Hampstead 5	M Guise-Brown (2) Schlueter Glew
Southgate 2 Hampstead 5	J Kelly (3) O’Meara N Steffens
Hampstead 4 Holcombe 2	Puig Arimon Schlueter (2) M Guise-Brown
Hampstead 3 Brighton 1	Davey (2) Glew
Chelmsford 2 Hampstead 7	Davey Schlueter N Steffens (2) Fox Glew M Guise-Brown
Hampstead 4 Old Cranleighan 2	Spencer M Guise-Brown (2) Davey

<b>Hampstead</b>	18	13	3	2	73	42	31	42
Holcombe 2	18	10	4	4	67	48	19	34
Old Cranleighan	18	10	2	6	69	41	28	32
London Wayfarers	18	9	4	5	47	40	7	31
Spencer	18	7	3	8	46	44	2	24
Southgate 2	18	7	3	8	43	46	-3	24
Bromley & Beckenham	18	7	2	9	40	48	-8	23
Chelmsford	18	5	1	12	36	67	-31	16
Brighton & Hove	18	4	4	10	31	62	-31	16
Wimbledon 2	18	4	2	12	38	52	-14	14

### **Elsewhere in the Men's National League**

Division 1 North	Bowdon hold off Repton to return to the Premier Division
Division 1 South	University of Exeter win the title by eleven points from Guildford
Conference West	Clifton Robinsons hold off Marlow on goal difference to gain promotion
Conference Midlands	Leek are champions from Oxford Hawks by four points. St Albans are third
Conference North	Leeds, Neston and Lindum end in the same order as they were at Christmas

### **England Hockey: London Area**



#### **London Men's Division 2 South**

Having led at the Christmas break, Hampstead's 3<sup>rd</sup> XI finished in fourth place, to Spencer 3<sup>rd</sup> XI, Bromley & Beckenham 2<sup>nd</sup> XI and London Edwardians 2<sup>nd</sup> XI, with fifteen wins, three draws and four defeats.

#### **London Men's Division 2 North**

Hampstead's Zak Hond XI ended the season in eighth place and the 4<sup>th</sup> XI in eleventh (of twelve). The Zaks were on 25 points and the 4<sup>th</sup> XI on seventeen. Spencer 4 were the league's winners, with 105 goals.

#### **London Men's Division 4 North West**

Hampstead's Thirsts XI eased to fourth place with 33 points. West Hampstead 4<sup>th</sup> XI won the title behind Harrow 1<sup>st</sup> XI, PHC Chiswick 3<sup>rd</sup> XI and Wapping 5<sup>th</sup> XI.

#### **London Men's Division 5 North West**

Hampstead's Spaniards finished in fourth spot in a highly competitive Division. The top three teams all ended with 39 points and fourth and fifth each had 38 points. The Spaniards goal difference was better than any other team. Ealing 1<sup>st</sup> XI were winners, from Ashford 2<sup>nd</sup> XI and Old Haberdashers' 1<sup>st</sup> XI in third. The Hampstead Colts XIs remained in sixth place on 33 points.

#### **London Women's Premier Division**

Hampstead's 3<sup>rd</sup> XI dropped to eleventh of the twelve teams with 21 points.

### **London Women's Division 1**

It was the same for Hampstead's 4<sup>th</sup> XI, in eleventh place with eleven points, ahead of Wimbledon 3<sup>rd</sup> XI who gained five points in the latter part of the season.

### **London Women's Division 2 North**

Hampstead's 5<sup>th</sup> XI ended in eighth spot after eight wins and eleven losses.

### **London Women's Division 3 North**

Hampstead's 6<sup>th</sup> XI gained one place to end in tenth place with sixteen points, ahead of Winchmore Hill & Enfield 1<sup>st</sup> XI and Richmond Ravens.

### **London Women's Division 4 East**

Hampstead's 7<sup>th</sup> XI was another in tenth place of twelve, eleven points adrift of Spencer's 7<sup>th</sup> XI in ninth.

### **Masters Hockey**

#### ***South Masters Men O40 Premier Division***

Hampstead's Masters were still at the foot of the table, four points away from Old Georgian Fire in eighth. Old Cranleigh Stormers won the title,

#### ***South Masters Men O50 Premier Division***

Hampstead's Supervets remained in fourth place in the Division, with 30 points. The winners of the Division were Reading Redsox.

#### ***South Masters Men O60 Premier Division***

Hampstead's Grandmasters concluded the season in fourth place. Bromley & Beckenham Wizards lost out to Reading Relics for the championship by six points. Surbiton Vintage did not win a game and ended with a goal difference of -90 (in spite of help during the season from some Hampstead players).

### **England Hockey Awards**

For the first time this year, England Hockey Awards had Area level winners, to allow for greater recognition of more individuals, volunteers, teams and clubs than before. The winners in two categories for the Area were:

#### ***Club of the Year***

Old Merchant Taylor's HC

#### ***Emerging Club of the Year***

The Old Haberdashers HC

### **Hampstead's Youth**



Gabriella Giles, Izzy Earl and Zoey Scrutton played for the women's 1<sup>st</sup> XI against Reading in the 2-2 draw at Sonning on 15 March 2026 in the first Top Six match. This was the first time U16 players were included by the women for Premier Division hockey. Gabriella went on to be selected in the women's 1s squad in Vienna over Easter and in the National League Play offs at Surbiton.

### **Tier 2 London, South East and South Central**

The U18 Girls ended their season with silver medals. After winning their Tier 2 league, the team went on to league finals where they played Old Cranleighans and Southgate. With one win and one loss, they finished in second place.



### **Tier 1 London, South East and South Central**



U18 Boys at Weybridge

In a closely fought league final at Old Georgians HC, the U18 Boys drew 1-1 with Trojans in regulation time. The teams went *head to head* in penalty shuffles and were still drawn at 5-5. In sudden death, Hampstead edged ahead and were crowned winners of Tier 1 London, South East and South Central.

### **Tier 1 National Cup Final**

Going one better, the U18 Boys won Tier 1 National Cup Final in a shoot out after late comeback, to be crowned England champions at the end of an unbeaten season. For the second successive year, they faced Repton in the final. Repton took an early lead, going 2-0 up in the first ten minutes. Having boarded a train to Newcastle instead of Nottingham, Lewis redeemed himself with the first goal just before half time.

Repton scored their third goal in the 46th minute to take a 3-1 lead. Hampstead's coaches James Oates and Tom Crowson then strategically withdrew their goalkeeper, Dan. Jake Glew scored to keep Repton on their toes. Hampstead continued to push and were rewarded with another goal from Jake in the 68th minute. The game ended all square two minutes later. In the resulting shoot out, after some heroic goalkeeping from Dan, Hampstead came out 3-1 on top to seal the win.

Sincere thanks were offered to all the players and parents who committed to the team this season, including Team Manager Tina for making sure everyone was where they needed to be, and coaches James & Tom (men's 1<sup>st</sup> XI players) "who travelled the country come rain or shine".

The team will now head to the U19 Boys EHCO Trophy in Europe for Easter 2027 as the top English club, where they will face season winners from The Netherlands, Spain, Belgium and Germany.



U18 Boys at Beeston Hockey Centre

### **London In2Hockey Cup Final**

With three wins - and a clean sheet - at their regional heat, the U10 Boys were group winners at their In2Hockey Cup tournament. They went on to play in the London In2Hockey Cup Final on 26th April 2026 at Lee Valley against Spencer, Surbiton and Blackheath & Elthamians.

H&W 0 Spencer 1

Surbiton 5 Blackheath & Elthamians 0

Blackheath & Elthamians 0 Spencer 0

Surbiton Cheetahs 2 H&W 0  
 H&W 2 Blackheath & Elthamians 0  
 Spencer 0 Surbiton Cheetahs 4

Surbiton	3	3	0	0	11	9
Spencer	3	1	1	1	-3	4
<b>Hampstead</b>	3	1	0	2	-1	3
Blackheath & Elthamians	3	0	1	2	-7	1



### European Hockey Trophy



#### *Hampstead's Graduates*

After winning the National Tier 1 Cup Final as U18 Boys last season, Hampstead secured the English spot in the annual European Hockey Clubs Organisation (EHCO) Trophy at SV Kampong, alongside The Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Belgium and South Africa. The tournament brings together the leading hockey clubs of Europe with the clear purpose of strengthening the role of clubs as the foundation of our sport. EHCO was founded to give clubs a united voice in discussions with the FIH and EuroHockey (European Hockey Federation).

Member clubs work to:

- align calendars between domestic competitions and international events.
- safeguard and strengthen the flagship Euro Hockey League (EHL) and the EHCO Trophy (the main U19 European club tournament); and
- protect the 11-a-side format that embodies the essence of hockey.

This was the Hampstead team a year on and without much opportunity to have play together recently. In a tough group they faced RC Polo (Spain) on Friday night. They played well but struggled to convert their chances, finishing 1-2 to the Spaniards. On Saturday afternoon, they met Waterloo Ducks of Belgium. In a much tougher match, they were on the scoreboard early on but the game finished 1-5. Their third match was the toughest yet against top of the group, Wespen of Germany. With a controversial disallowed goal for Hampstead early in the match, the team lost momentum and Wespen capitalised with a few quick goals. Despite being 1-6 down at half time, Hampstead played a cracking second half and the game ended at 2-8, following a late surge from the Germans.

In the 7th/8th play off, Hampstead faced Rotterdam at 9.00am on Monday, with some bleary eyes from the Sunday night BBQ and social. At 2-2 in the fourth quarter, it looked that the game would go to shuffles. However, Rotterdam won a penalty corner in the closing minutes, which they converted to win 3-2.

The team worked hard across four tough days and it was encouraging to see the hockey graduates from Hampstead return for the tournament. Thanks were given to guest Coach Richard Smith, Assistant Coach Jason Riley, Team Manager Dom Strawbridge, Analyst Darren Hincks and Assistant Coach Ewan Hincks.

## FIH Pro League



In London this June, for its seventh season, the FIH Hockey Pro League features top international sides, with England's men and women set for a run of home fixtures in the capital. England's men face Argentina, Australia, Pakistan and India. The women come up against Germany, Australia, Spain and Argentina. England men's head coach Zak Jones said, "The London stage of the Pro League will be very important in terms of our preparations for the World Cup, as it provides us with a high density of competitive fixtures that allows us to get a good measure and feel for where we are as a squad and how we are tracking in our ability to deliver our game. It also allows us to try, tweak, test and cement certain aspects of our game as well as look at our best combinations in order to finalise our World Cup selection."

Women's head coach David Ralph said, "We always look forward to playing Pro League games at London, in front of our home support. We are very lucky that we get to play so many games at home against the best teams in the world in front a great crowd and that is something that we always relish and get excited for. To see so many people come out to support us and the sport of hockey, in our own country is exciting and hugely motivation for us, it's not something we take for granted and we look forward to playing some many games in front of them this summer."

### *Upcoming England Matches*

#### *Women*

20 June 2026	England vs Australia at 1500h
21 June 2026	England vs Australia at 1400h
24 June 2026	England vs Spain at 1100h
25 June 2026	England vs Argentina at 1700h

27 June 2026 England vs Spain at 1330h  
28 June 2026 England vs Argentina at 1330h

#### *Men*

20 June 2026 England vs Argentina at 1230h  
21 June 2026 England vs Australia at 1130h  
24 June 2026 England vs Pakistan at 1330h  
25 June 2026 England vs India at 1930h  
27 June 2026 England vs Pakistan at 1600h  
28 June 2026 England vs India at 1600h

All England matches will be shown on live on [Channel 4 Sport YouTube](#).

#### **Women's Results**

##### *Yunfu Education Park, China*

China 0 Netherlands 3  
England 0 Netherlands 3  
China 3 England 2  
China 1 Netherlands 6  
Netherlands 3 England 1  
China 0 England 2

##### *Valencia*

Spain 3 Belgium 5  
Germany 1 Belgium 3  
Spain 1 Germany 1 (4-2 s/out)  
Spain 1 Belgium 0  
Belgium 1 Germany 0  
Spain 3 Germany 1

##### *Hobart*

Ireland 0 Argentina 5  
Australia 0 Argentina 1  
Australia 0 Ireland 0 (4-2 s/out)  
Argentina 2 Ireland 1  
Australia 0 Argentina 3  
Australia 1 Ireland 4  
Australia 1 Spain 4  
China 3 Spain 0  
Australia 1 China 3  
Australia 2 Spain 2 (1-2 s/out)  
Spain 2 China 2 (3-4 s/out)  
Australia 1 China 3

##### *Belfius Belgium*

China 1 Argentina 4  
Belgium 2 Argentina 2 (1-2 s/out)

##### *Rotterdam*

Netherlands 7 Ireland 0  
Netherlands 4 Ireland 0

*Lee Valley*

England 1 Germany 2

England 0 Germany 3

**Men's Results**

*Valencia*

Spain 3 Netherlands 4

England 2 Netherlands 2 (3-1 s/out)

Spain 1 England 3

Spain 2 Netherlands 3

Netherlands 2 England 2 (3-4 s/out)

Spain 2 England 4

*Hobart*

Australia 3 Pakistan 2

Pakistan 2 Germany 5

Australia 3 Germany 0

Australia 3 Pakistan 0

Germany 6 Pakistan 1

Australia 3 Germany 2

Australia 3 Spain 1

India 0 Spain 2

Australia 2 India 2 (5-4 s/out)

Australia 3 Spain 0

Spain 1 India 1 (4-3 s/out)

Australia 1 India 1 (1-3 s/out)

*Rourkela*

Belgium 5 Argentina 3

India 1 Belgium 3

India 0 Argentina 8

Argentina 2 Belgium 5

India 2 Belgium 4

India 2 Argentina 4

*Lee Valley*

England 5 Argentina 0

England 4 Australia 3

*Belfius, Belgium*

Belgium 7 Pakistan 1

Pakistan 1 Spain 5

*Rotterdam*

Netherlands 2 Germany 2 (0-1 s/out)

Netherlands 3 India 2

**Current Tables** (at the time of *going to press* – and matches are currently being played)

*Women*

Netherlands	Played 10	30 points
Belgium	Played 9	22
Argentina	Played 10	22
China	Played 9	14
Spain	Played 8	14
Germany	Played 10	8
England	Played 10	7
Ireland	Played 10	6
Australia	Played 8	3

*Men*

Belgium	Played 9	25 points
Australia	Played 9	21
England	Played 10	21
Netherlands	Played 10	19
Argentina	Played 9	17
Germany	Played 9	11
Spain	Played 9	8
India	Played 9	4
Pakistan	Played 10	0

**World Cup Qualification**

The 2026 World Cup matches will take place in Amsterdam and the Belfius Hockey Arena in Wavre, Belgium (Av. du Centre Sportif 15, 1300 Wavre) starting on 15 August 2026 and concluding on 30 August 2026.

Men's Pool A

Argentina Japan Netherlands New Zealand

Pool B

Belgium France Germany Malaysia

Pool C

Australia Spain Ireland South Africa

Pool D

India England Pakistan Wales

Women's Pool A

Australia Chile Japan Netherlands

Pool B

Argentina Germany Scotland United States

Pool C

Belgium Spain Ireland New Zealand

Pool D

China England India South Africa

**Amsterdam Fixtures**

*15 August 2026*

Women            Australia vs Japan  
                      Netherlands vs Chile

Men	India vs Wales England vs Pakistan
<i>16 August 2026</i>	
Women	England vs South Africa China vs India
Men	Netherlands vs New Zealand Argentina vs Japan
<i>17 August 2026</i>	
Women	Chile vs Japan Australia vs Netherlands
Men	Pakistan vs Wales India vs England
<i>18 August 2026</i>	
Women	England vs China India vs South Africa
Men	New Zealand vs Japan Argentina vs Netherlands
<i>19 August 2026</i>	
Women	Chile vs Australia Netherlands vs Japan
Men	England vs Wales Pakistan vs India
<i>20 August 2026</i>	
Women	China vs South Africa India vs England
Men	New Zealand vs Argentina Netherlands vs Japan

### England Hockey Club Championship Finals

The several winners are:

Women's Trophy	Liverpool Sefton
Women's Shield	Cheam
Women's Plate	Swindon
Women's Bowl	West Derby
Women's Slaver	Tulse Hill & Dulwich 4
Women's Vase	Beeston 3
Open/Men's Trophy	Sheffield University Bankers
Open/Men's Shield	Clifton Robinsons 4
Open/Men's Plate	Haslemere
Open/Men's Bowl	Weston Super Mare
Open/Men's Salver	Sandbach
Open/Men's Vase	Tulse Hill and Dulwich 2
Women's O35s Cup	Sutton Coldfield
Women's O35s Trophy	Slough
Women's O35s Vase	Olton & West Warks
Women O45s Cup	Harleston Magpies
Women's O45s Trophy	Epsom
Women's O45s Vase	Sonning

Women's O55s Cup	Guildford
Women's O55s Trophy	Timperley
Women's O55s Vase	Hendon & Mill Hill
Open/Men's O35s Cup	Harleston Magpies
Open/Men's O35s Trophy	Boots
Open/Men's O35s Vase	Burnt Ash (Bexley)
Open/Men's O45s Cup	Old Cranleighan
Open/Men's O45s Trophy	Canterbury
Open/Men's O45s Vase	City of Peterborough
Open/Men's O55s Cup	Reading
Open/Men's O55s Trophy	Old Georgians
Open/Men's O55s Vase	Trojans
Open/Men's O65s Cup	Cheshire

## Rule Changes

England Hockey has released its updated rule guidance for the 2026-27 season, with several important changes that will come into effect from 1 September 2026.

The changes follow the latest revisions to the FIH Rules of Hockey and apply to both adult and junior competitions. Key are clearer sanctions for having too many players on the pitch, the permanent adoption of the aerial ball rule trial across all competitions, revised guidance on the disposal of penalty corner protective equipment and clarifications for both goalkeepers and umpires. The maximum permitted size of a goalkeeper's left-hand protector has also been increased to 365mm, allowing manufacturers to produce larger CE-compliant gloves that remain legal under FIH regulations.

### 2.1 Too many players on the pitch

Where this materially affects the match, the captain must now receive a yellow card. Where there is no material impact, a personal penalty may be given at the umpire's discretion.

### 5.1 Match Timings

This specifies four quarters of 15 minutes plus 10 minutes for half time

**Instead for the EHL – All Divisions will be 4 x quarters of 17 minutes 30 seconds. 2 minutes quarter time. 5- 10 minutes half time (agreed before game starts). For Area Leagues – Prem 4 x quarters of 17 minutes 30 seconds. 2 minutes quarter time. 5 minutes half time**

### 8.2 and 13.3(a) Stopping Time

Time and play are stopped following the award of a goal and/or a Penalty Corner

Introduces the stopping of the clock after a goal or Penalty Corner has been scored.

**This is not to apply by default to EH competitions**

### 9.10 Aerial balls (trial now adopted)

Defenders may approach once the receiver has touched the ball (previously only once the receiver controlled the ball and brought it to the ground), provided the initial five metres of safe space were respected.

This changes how the aerial rule will be officiated. Defenders may engage earlier, not requiring the

ball to be on the floor. It was used in National League Premier Division's previous season and implementation across all divisions is to provide greater consistency. Player safety remains paramount and this is emphasised at all times.

### **10.2 Goalkeepers using stick and body to deflect the ball behind the backline**

The updated wording clarifies that when the ball is inside the circle that a goalkeeper is defending and they have their stick in hand, they may use both their stick and body to deflect the ball over the backline or play it in any direction.

### **11.8 Ball hitting an umpire**

If the ball hits an umpire or an unauthorised person on the field, play shall continue unless the contact results in an advantage to one team, in which case the match shall re-start with a bully. This ensures that an accidental touch by an umpire does not unfairly influence the outcome of a match.

### **13.3(n) Penalty Corner protective equipment**

Players need to remove their Penalty Corner equipment safely and as soon as they can. This clarifies that players may pass the ball from a defensive free hit but not take a self-pass whilst still wearing the equipment. It also adds explicit guidance about removing equipment safely. If an opponent, umpire or any other person outside the field of play is hit on or above the knee in a normal stance, the player throwing the equipment must receive a yellow card.

## **Yesteryear**

A few snippets from the press (and not necessarily club related)...

### **6 July 1926**

At the annual general meeting of the Hockey Association, which was held at the Russell Hotel, Russell Square, it was announced that the Council have had the new waterproof ball under consideration, and although it is in contravention of Rule 6, which specifies a leather cricket ball, they have no objection to the ball being used during the coming season in club matches, provided that both sides agree to its use. The suitability of the ball will be brought up for further discussion by the Council at the end of the season. A proposal that neutral umpires should control all divisional, games was favourably received by the meeting and referred to the Council for consideration;

### **21 April 1936**

The hockey season which has just finished has had the worst weather of any for many years, a large number of games having to be cancelled because of wet, frost, or fog. The abandonment of the Hockey Association's Jubilee international owing to rain was the severest blow of all, as it was not found possible to rearrange the game. The University match had to be postponed for a week on account of fog and was nearly abandoned the following week because of rain and nearly all the Easter Festivals took place in bitterly cold and unpleasant weather.

Club form in the South has been well up to the average this season and Mid-Surrey and Tulse Hill have again proved the two strongest of the London clubs. Cheam and Spencer have both accomplished many good performances and Southgate and Teddington, of the old clubs, have had their usual successful season. Hampstead and Dulwich have both been disappointing, lack of forwards in each case being the cause.

Of the less renowned clubs, Reigate, the Hawks and HAC have shown that they are fully capable of holding their own with the leading sides and Staines, a leading light in the hockey world for many years, have benefited by the amalgamation with Egham and shown a healthy revival this season.

### **18 May 1946**

Most of the major events in the 1948 Olympic Games will be held at Wembley, either at the Empire Stadium or in the Empire Pool and Sports Arena. Mr A J Elvin, the managing director, states that the use of the stadium is being given without charge and that the Wembley organisation has been offered to the Games Committee. The Civic Hall and the Palace of Arts, both buildings in the old British Empire Exhibition grounds, have been acquired by Wembley Stadium, Limited and will be available, after suitable adaptation, for use in connexion with the Games during which Wembley's usual activities will be suspended.

The following events, if agreed by the International Olympic Committee for inclusion in the programme, will take place at the Empire Stadium, Wembley, namely:-

The opening and closing ceremonies, including the Prix de Nations for horse jumping; All track and field events; Football; Hockey.

### **16 May 1956**

Britain's leading hockey players and officials are to be actively at work during the summer months. The British Hockey Board are holding a weekend training course from May 25 to 27 at Lilleshall with some 27 players engaged; and importantly, too, for the team and reserves travelling to Melbourne will be chosen immediately afterwards. Two matches will be played at Aldershot, by courtesy of the GOC, Aldershot District, during the weekend June 30 to July 1, when the probable Olympic XI will be opposed by the reserves and other players specially chosen to complete the opposition. A further training weekend will be held at Devonport, by courtesy of the C-in-C Plymouth, on September 15 and 16, where a hard composition pitch is available in addition to the normal grass ones.

### **4 June 1966**

#### ***London XI 1 India 5***

A lovely sunny evening and a flawless pitch gave the Indian hockey team a chance to spread the plumes of their game in front of an English crowd at Surbiton last evening. Playing with a gentle control that masked their sudden lethal bursts, they first held, then outplayed and finally bemused, the London side against them.

Although the Indians were obviously at half pace through most of the second half their control and accurate passing, spiced with humour as Joginder Singh enjoyed himself on the right, were a delight. London started quite brightly, both Miller and Kossuth penetrating dangerously but shortly a flash of Harbinder Singh through the middle gave India the first corner. Austin-Jones, who played bravely throughout in the London goal, saved that one, but from a second, again from a break by Harbinder Singh, Mohinder Lal put India in front

One fast run by Kossuth nearly got a goal for London but on the instant Harbinder Singh, stung by this trespass on his preserves, produced one of his own masterpieces and that was two to India. Just on half-time, a scramble in the circle let Indar Singh with half a view of goal and in it went but London replied bravely when Miller went down the left, a short corner came from his centre and Scott shot in off a defender's stick. The second half was all India. Almost walking at times, their forwards ran the defence ragged, throwing even so experienced player as Deegan off balance and cutting the wing halves to ribbons. Indar Singh scored twice more but the Indians were more intent on enjoying themselves and spent most of the time indicating, as it were, the way openings could be made without throwing in the final punch. A fascinating evening - but what a gap there is between Indian and British standards.

## **15 June 1976**

Recent events in Amsterdam opened new fields of interest for British hockey teams in Europe. Southgate's achievement in winning the European Cup for national club champions presented them with the opportunity to run the next event themselves and also enabled Nottingham, the 1975-76 English champions, to qualify automatically.

If most of the matches in Amsterdam were exciting, discussion in the conference room appeared to be equally stimulating. At a full council meeting of the European Hockey Federation (EHF) a new format was accepted for the European Cup (for nations), which was last held at Madrid in 1974.

It was decided that the next event would be held in West Germany in September 1978 with 12 teams taking part in the final pool. The first six teams from Madrid will qualify automatically, which means that England, who finished fourth, are already in it. The other entrants must play in preliminary rounds in three or possibly four groups, depending on the number of entrants. There are now 24 countries affiliated to the EHF. This event will be held every four years, assuming that the World Cup tournament reverts to its proper year in 1983.

## **Other club stuff**

### **90 Years Ago**

#### **Saturday, 4 April 1936**

The 1<sup>st</sup> XI beats Hendon 4-3 to bring an end to the season in which they played 24 matches but won only four, drew four and lost 16, scoring 44 goals and conceding 75.

### **70 Years Ago**

#### **Monday, 9 April 1956**

A Committee Meeting is convened in light of an offer put to Brondesbury CC by a school for use of the pitches for football in winter and cricket in the summer and the wish of Brondesbury CC to reach a compromise with the Club.

### **65 Years Ago**

#### **Monday, 15 May 1961**

The Hornsey Club had offered to reduce the rent by the Club by £10 for the 1960-61 season (towards the expense of hiring pitches at Victoria Park, Hackney) and the Committee agrees to accept this offer.

### **50 Years Ago**

#### **Thursday, 22 April 1976**

At the AGM, convened at Pizza Express, 10 Wardour Street, London W1, the Secretary explains that, as part of the Hornsey Club, we no longer had a post of President. As it was essential to have a figurehead, the Committee was recommending the position of Club Captain be introduced to fulfil that role and who would be elected annually. Richard Shaw (seconded by Arthur Soares) proposed that Stan Elgar be elected Club Captain for the 1976-77 season and the motion was passed unanimously.

### **40 Years Ago**

#### **Thursday, 24 April 1986**

The Committee approves a recommendation that Peter Boizot should be appointed President of the Club for the 1986-87 season.

### **35 Years Ago**

#### **Saturday, 23 March 1991**

In an epic encounter at Reed's School, Cobham, the 1<sup>st</sup> XI faces Surbiton in the final game of the South League season for a place in the National League (without play-offs). Hampstead takes the lead and

could have made it 2-0 but Dave Powder's shot hits the post. Surbiton then equalises and the game ends 1-1 that gives Surbiton top spot (and promotion) on goal difference.

### 30 Years Ago

**Friday, 21 June 1996**


The AGM of Middlesex County Hockey Association reveals that 19% of nation-wide red cards were administered in Middlesex matches. The Report to the meeting mentions the Club's "all too brief debut (*sic*)" in the National League.



Photo; Max Flego

Rhys Bradshaw, voted Men's Player of the Year, in action against Holcombe

### Who remembers?



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### Next edition

All being well, the next Newsletter will report on the start of the 2026-27 season and include, among other things, details of EH's potentially controversial minimum operating standards.

If you have any news or comment, please direct it to [disvelwell@gmail.com](mailto:disvelwell@gmail.com)