

Notice to families with House League players born 2014(U9) & 2015(U8): In order to adapt to enrolment numbers and to continue to offer a great hockey experience to our players, it is necessary to make changes to the **U8 (2015)** and **U9 (2014)** House League divisions. Enrolment numbers do not support a separate 4 team division at either age bracket this year. Therefore, a merged **U8/U9** division of 6 teams will be used to create teams of reasonable size and allow for a variety of game opponents. The program will combine the best elements of U8 and U9 and offer the same structure to all players in the new, merged division. Sunday games (Half Ice) will begin on Nov 20, 2022, after one month of practices. The division will transition to Full Ice games in late January for the remaining 6 weeks of the season. We are pleased to be organizing Development sessions led by professional hockey school instructors to take place during several Saturday practices for each team. (4 sessions in the fall and 3 in the winter, [tentative])

FAQ

Are U8 players permitted to transition to Full Ice? Yes. Hockey Canada outlines a few different options for merged U8/U9 divisions. FHA has selected the option that keeps the division together and offers a Full Ice learning experience to all players. Additional information is found in [Hockey Canada's U9 Player Pathway document](#), reference page 18.

What happens to U8 players when they are in U9 the following year? Do they remain at Full Ice? No. This season's U8 players will return to Half Ice for the first portion of their U9 season next year.

Which pucks will be used? Hockey Canada calls for blue 4oz pucks at U8 and OMHA allows black 6oz pucks at U9. We will use blue pucks for the start of the season and switch to black when we transition to Full Ice.

Will the 6 teams be balanced? Yes. The Evaluation Skates will be used to create teams that are as balanced as possible. Please be advised that team assignments will be readjusted for balance, if required, after the first few games.

Should I be concerned about the level of play? Will my U8 player keep up? Will my U9 player be less challenged playing with younger participants? Both U8 and U9 are likely to have a range of lower skilled and higher skilled players. Each team will have a mixture of these. House League divisions often include two birth years.

How will this affect the schedule? The schedule for evaluation skates will remain as showing in the league calendars. The expected time slots for the balance of the season have changed slightly. Please see Rev 3 of the [FHA 2022-2023 House League Weekly Schedule - Tentative](#). Most notable is Sunday games at 1pm, 2pm or 3pm whereas previously U9 was to play Sunday at 3pm and 4pm only. Check the revision notes on page 2 for the details.

Further questions? LowerHouse@flamboroughhockey.com