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██████████ 2023

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**Re: Adam Robert Johnson (deceased)**

Thank you for your letters with reference to Adam Robert Johnson, and for sharing the information available to you at that time. We are happy to assist you at this time with the following information, as requested.

**Regulations around neck laceration protection**

The relative rarity of this type of injury means that there is relatively little research on the topic. The International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) maintain records of injuries at all their Championship events; their registry records one neck laceration (of minor severity) in the 7,000 games for which records are held; this equates to an estimated risk to an individual player of one injury (of any severity) for every 300,000 games they play.

The IIHF rulebook for 2023-24, which applies to all parts of the sport in the UK, contains the following references to neck protection:

**“Rule 9.5 – Protective Equipment:**

Equipment must conform to safety standards and be used only to protect Players, not to enhance or improve playing ability or to cause injury to an opponent. All players are strongly recommended to wear equipment made of cut resistance material for their safety. For all players in the senior competition category it is strongly recommended to wear a neck laceration protector in a proper way and that is not modified or damaged.

**“Rule 9.12 – Neck Laceration Protector**

All players are recommended to properly wear a neck laceration protection. This protective device is recommended to cover as large of an area as possible on the player.

“A Goalkeeper may attach a throat protector to the chin of their facemask. It must be made of a material that will not cause injury.

Players who play in senior categories but are of the age as “Under 20” and “Under 18” categories must wear the appropriate protective equipment of these U20 and U18 categories in accordance with the specific rules.”

Rules 202.5 and 202.6 require all players in the U20 and U18 age categories respectively “to wear, in a proper way, a neck laceration protection. It is recommended that this protective device covers as much of the players body as possible.”. Rule 102.6 extends this requirement to the Women’s U18 category.

On 4 December 2023, the IIHF released a statement mandating neck laceration protection at all levels of IIHF competition, acknowledging the exact date for the imposition of the mandate would be under review given the high demand and supply issues of the neck laceration protector.

([https://www.iihf.com/en/news/56022/iihf\\_mandates\\_neck\\_laceration\\_protection\\_at\\_all\\_le](https://www.iihf.com/en/news/56022/iihf_mandates_neck_laceration_protection_at_all_le)).

### **Neck laceration protection**

The current international standard covering the design and construction of neck laceration protector (ISO 10256-5:2017) is essentially unchanged since it was first introduced; it is currently under review, with key stakeholders within the global ice hockey community actively engaged in its revision.

### **English Ice Hockey Association response**

On 30 October 2023, the English Ice Hockey Association (EIHA) along with Ice Hockey UK (IHUK) and Scottish Ice Hockey (SIH), released a statement recognising the need for short, medium and long term action in response to Adam Johnson's death. The statement confirmed that neck laceration protectors would be strongly recommended at all levels with immediate effect and become compulsory from 1 January 2024 at all levels of ice hockey in the UK. The statement can be found here: <https://englandicehockey.com/eiha-update-player-safety/>

A further update, a copy of which is attached for your convenience, will be published on 30 December 2023 to confirm the mandate, with the exception of Recreational Hockey (the community level of the sport) where the supply of neck laceration protectors has meant that the strong recommendation has been extended until 1 April 2024.

EIHA, along with IHUK and SIH, are committed to undertaking a player safety equipment review and procedures for ensuring player safety at all levels of the sport in the UK.

### **Governance structure of Ice Hockey in the UK**

The International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) is the worldwide governing body for the sport, under whose jurisdiction we fall.

Ice Hockey UK (IHUK) is the recognised National Governing Body across the UK, with overall responsibility to the IIHF for the conduct of the sport, and with operational responsibility for delivery of the GB National Team programme, representing the sport at international level. There are a number of constituent member organisations who fall under the overall umbrella of IHUK.

The Elite Ice Hockey League (EIHL) is a commercial organisation who manage the top-level of professional ice hockey in the UK; this is the league in which Adam was playing at the time of his untimely death. The EIHL hold operational responsibility for the conduct of the sport in their league, within the rules laid down in the IIHF rulebook.

The English Ice Hockey Association (EIHA), now known as England Ice Hockey, is responsible for the organisation and delivery of the sport in England and Wales, at all other levels. Scottish Ice Hockey (SIH) undertakes this role for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

We trust this clarifies the existing situation and organisational responsibilities for the time being and is helpful to you. We remain available to assist you in your investigations in any way.

Yours sincerely,

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Vice Chair