

## 2023-24 OMGHA Junior Gold Hockey - Overview & FAQs



**What is Junior Gold?** Junior Gold is the highest age classification for boys in Minnesota Hockey and in OMGHA. After completing Bantams, some players advance to the Osseo, Maple Grove or other local varsity or junior varsity high school teams. Jr. Gold is an alternative for the majority who do not. In large associations like OMGHA, Jr. Gold dually serves in providing continued developmental opportunities for those hopeful of progressing to their high school teams in subsequent seasons, and in functioning as a path for those who aren't capable or interested in playing high school hockey, yet who desire continued participation in a fully-sanctioned, structured, and competitive hockey environment. Jr. Gold is an age classification within Minnesota Hockey, the same as other youth levels such as Bantams, Peewees, and Squirts.

**Is Junior Gold "travel hockey"?** Yes, Jr. Gold is travel hockey. Cost and time requirements reflect that designation. (*See the time and cost topics addressed below*).

**What are the ages and levels of Junior Gold?** The term "Junior Gold" in a general sense refers to the broad four-year age classification of 15-18 year olds (*typically grades 10-12*). However, specifically within Jr. Gold, there are two age classifications and three levels of play.

- **Junior Gold 16:** The youngest age classification is "Junior Gold 16". Players with birthdays between June 1, 2004 and May 31, 2006 are eligible for Jr Gold 16.. Similar to how Bantams are 14U teams, generally comprised of 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders and the occasional "young sophomore", Jr. Gold 16 (16U) is the next two-year age class, with rosters comprised of sophomores, juniors, and possibly "young seniors".
- **Junior Gold A & B:** "Junior Gold A" and "Junior Gold B" classifications are for players with birthdays between June 1, 2002 and May 31, 2006. All players playing Jr. Gold classification are eligible to make the JGA or JGB teams. Those rosters can be comprised of players from across all three years of high school - sophomore, junior, and senior.

Jr. Gold A is the highest competitive level of play, B is the next level and Jr Gold 16 is the lowest competitive level. League policies stipulate that teams should be formed skill-wise in that order and that associations with multiple Jr. Gold B and/or JG16 teams strive to balance those teams. OMGHA follows these league policies when establishing its Jr. Gold teams.

**Does everyone make a team? Are players who are no longer Junior Gold 16-eligible guaranteed a spot on a B team?** It is OMGHA's desire to provide, whenever possible, opportunities for participation and, thus, has historically attempted to field enough Jr. Gold teams to have a team for all players. Consistent with that philosophy, players no longer JG16 age-eligible (*i.e. most seniors*) who would not otherwise make the Jr. Gold A or B teams generally have been given spots on a B team. However, per the unique and varying circumstances of any given season, either pertaining to the Jr. Gold program at-large or to an individual player, placement on a team, and thus participation in the program, is not guaranteed. Additionally, safety is a concern for all of the players and if a player is felt to be a risk to his own safety and others, alternative options would be recommended for the player.

**What is the tryout process/schedule?** Since many Jr. Gold players tryout for their high school team, the tryout process for Jr. Gold doesn't occur until mid/late November, immediately after the high school teams have been named. The Jr. Gold players are then evaluated by coaches and independent evaluators over the course of three days of drills and scrimmages and then assigned to teams based on the evaluations. A pre-tryout camp starting in mid-October is open to all potential Junior Gold players.

**What is the time commitment?** The season generally runs from the mid/late November tryouts (*with games starting late November or early December*) through early March (*mid/late March if team goes deep into the playoffs*). The typical week consists of 4-6 ice times (*generally 2-4 games plus 1-2 practices*).

**What is the cost?** The registration fee is \$1600 for the season or initial registration fee of \$400 and four additional \$300 installments. There may be additional team assessments to cover the cost of scrimmage games, number of tournaments, number of players on the team, additional practice ice, team apparel, etc.

**Who do we play?** The Junior Gold High School Hockey League (JGSHSL.org) is an extension of Minnesota Hockey, established to administer Jr. Gold hockey in the Twin Cities metro area and greater Minnesota. The JGSHSL schedule consists of 24 games against teams from Wayzata, Edina, Minnetonka, Stillwater, Eden Prairie, Lakeville, other metro associations and teams from greater Minnesota. While the majority of regular season games come from league play, additional games are from invitational tournaments (*usually three tournaments per team, providing an additional 12 to 15 games*). The final JGSHSL league standings determine eligibility for each level's post-season tournament, which advances teams to the Minnesota Hockey State tournaments (A, B, 16). OMGHA Jr Gold A team has been designated as USA Hockey High School Nationals eligible and can advance to the USA Hockey High School National Championship.

**Where do I get more info about OMGHA Junior Gold hockey?** Visit the Junior Gold page on the OMGHA website ([www.OMGHA.com](http://www.OMGHA.com)) or contact Dave Margenau OMGHA Jr Gold Director ([dmargenau@aol.com](mailto:dmargenau@aol.com))