



Hull Hockey Hitmen

Upcoming Changes for 2027

Every year after spring hockey ends, we sit down and look at what worked, what didn't, and where we can make the experience even better. Some of these changes came from watching our teams over the past several seasons, some came from conversations with families, and some came from the reality of rising costs that every rink is dealing with. I wanted to explain not just what's changing for 2027, but why we're making those decisions.

While we have added programming such as weekly professional team chemistry activities and a weekly mental performance curriculum to bring an even greater experience to spring hockey, we've also made a few changes. Here's what to expect!

1. Our Out-of-State Tournament

We've always done an early-season tournament like the Chi-Town Shuffle. After a lot of discussions and looking at several years' worth of patterns, we've decided to move our out-of-state spring tournament to Memorial Day Weekend.

We looked at this from a lot of different angles, but one thing kept standing out. Every spring, our teams really begin to click during the final few weeks of the season. The chemistry, trust, and confidence they've built through weeks of intense practices and competition all come together at just the right time.

Rather than heading to a tournament early in April with a group that's still learning to play together, we want our players to experience the rewards of all the work they've put in throughout the spring. Ending the season with meaningful competition gives them the opportunity to compete as a true team and showcase everything they've built together over the prior seven weeks.

Another reason for choosing Memorial Day Weekend is that there are a lot of great out-of-state tournaments within a reasonable distance, and they consistently attract strong competition.

2. Later Tryouts & Season Start

Traditionally, we've started our spring season during the first few days of April. This year, our official start date will be April 12th, with tryouts taking place at the end of March and the first week of April.

We decided to push everything back for a few reasons, but one of the biggest was simply giving everyone a chance to recover from the season. The last thing I want is to add more stress to families who are already dealing with the end-of-season grind. Families, and players, shouldn't have to worry about spring tryouts while they're still wrapping up their fall and winter seasons.

Take some time, breathe, and recover.

...But you know me. 😊 Of course, I'll still have skills sessions and scrimmages running throughout March. For those of you who just can't stay away from the rink, I've got you covered! Just wait until you see what we are adding...Perhaps a March Madness All Star Challenge 🏒. More details coming!

3. No Scheduled Weekend Practices

This year, we won't have any regularly scheduled team practices on Saturdays or Sundays.

It isn't because we didn't enjoy weekend skates, we actually just love the idea of giving families the freedom to enjoy spring weekends however they want.

I know this won't be everyone's favorite change because weekends are easier for some families, but overall I think giving everyone a little more flexibility is worth it.

Of course, there may occasionally be a makeup practice scheduled on a weekend if we need one, but as of now, weekends are yours. Again, if you know me by now, you just KNOW I will add some things 😊

4. New Programming

As I mentioned above, we're adding two new pieces of programming with Brightside Fitness and Art Burns Coaching.

These are two phenomenal people who run incredible sessions. The team chemistry activities are an absolute blast and create an amazing team atmosphere. We've seen kids really buy into this type of programming because it's impossible not to laugh, compete, and build stronger relationships with teammates.

Coach Art also does an outstanding job teaching the mental side of sports. There's something about digging into confidence, resilience, and self-awareness that really helps athletes unlock another level of their game. His personality makes the sessions engaging, fun, and something players genuinely look forward to.

5. Practice Reduction & Pricing

You may also notice we've made a small adjustment to the number of team practices. In previous years, the Hitmen program included 21 practices. This season, we'll have 18.

If you've been with us for a while, you know I hate raising prices. One thing I've always promised myself is that families would never feel like they're just a dollar sign.

Unfortunately, our ice costs have increased twice over the past few years, and we absorbed those increases without raising tuition. This year, our ice costs are going up yet again.

At some point I had to make a decision: either raise tuition significantly or make a few adjustments to the schedule. I felt reducing three practices while adding higher-quality programming was the better option for everyone.

We've also shifted some of those resources into the new programming with Brightside Fitness and Art Burns Coaching, which helps keep the price increase much smaller than it otherwise would have been.

I truly believe these additions are going to bring something unique to our spring season, and I'm genuinely excited for everyone to experience them.

Final Thoughts

My goal has always been simple: provide a spring hockey experience that develops better players, builds great teammates, and gives families something they genuinely enjoy being a part of.

Every change we're making for 2027 was made with those goals in mind. Some decisions were easy, and some weren't, but I wanted everyone to understand why we're making them instead of simply announcing them.

As always, I appreciate all of your trust and support. I can't wait to get back on the ice with everyone this spring!

PS – I'm sure you've noticed the new website! Honestly, this was a change I was excited to make. A lot of our families are already familiar with the Crossbar platform, so it makes everything from scheduling to communication much more convenient. More importantly, the Hitmen has become a huge part of what we do, and I felt it deserved its own home. Having a dedicated website not only makes everything easier to navigate, but it also gives the program the identity it's earned over the years.