

# WHL PLAYOFF RULES 2026

## Playing Rules are the same as in League Play with these reminders:

1. Alcohol is NOT permitted in the dressing rooms. Teams that contradict this rule will lose 2 points earned during playoffs and may be subject to further discipline. Referees can eject players from the game they believe to be intoxicated.
2. No slap shots or fake slap shots allowed (wind up higher than the knee) in FUN, BEER, or MIDDLE Leagues. A minor penalty will be assessed.
3. No player is allowed to score more than 3 goals in the same game in FUN, BEER, or MIDDLE Leagues. The player's 4<sup>th</sup> goal will be disallowed and the ensuing face off will take place in the offending team's zone.
4. Players receiving 3 penalties in the same game will be ejected from that game.
5. Reckless Play Rule. A 10-minute misconduct penalty will be assessed to any player who plays in a reckless manner, accidentally or intentionally, that puts others in potential danger.
6. As in regular season, games will consist of three 15-minute running time periods with a 3-minute warm up starting as soon as the zamboni doors are closed. The puck will drop at the 15-minute mark of the first period and the 14-minute mark of the second and third periods whether teams are ready or not (sooner if both teams are ready).
7. **All penalties are running time (Minor 3-min; Major 7-min; Misconduct 10-min) and begin when the puck is dropped to resume play. All penalty times will be stopped at the end of a period and will resume once the puck is dropped to begin the next period.**
8. Intent to injure and fighting penalties will result in the player being ejected from the game and suspended for the remainder of the playoffs. The incident will be reviewed by league organizers to determine if further discipline is warranted.

## ROUND ROBIN GAMES & TIME OUTS

1. Tied games will remain a tie. **No overtime or shoot outs in the round robin.**
2. 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie and 0 points for a loss.
3. **One 30-second TV timeout per team is permitted in EVERY playoff game.**

## PICK UP PLAYERS

1. Teams with less than 10 skaters may pick up to a maximum of 10 skaters.
2. Each League will set their own criteria for eligible pickup players.
3. Teams can pick up a goalie using the following criteria:
  - #1 ranked goalie: Once, but not for a semi or final.
  - #2 ranked goalie: Twice, but not for a semi or final.
  - #3 ranked goalie: Three times, but not for a final.
  - All other goalies: Unlimited, any game.

4. All pickups must be approved by the League Manager who has full authority to deny any they deem unfair.
5. Teams using illegal or non-approved pickups will lose the game by default 5-0.

## **WHL TIE BREAKERS & OVERTIME RULES**

### **Tie Breaker Formula**

If teams are tied after the round robin, tie breakers will be determined in this order:

- a. record against other tied team (does not apply if more than 2 teams tied)
- b. higher plus/minus record in round robin games (goals for minus goals against)
- c. fewest goals against in round robin games
- d. fewest penalty minutes in round robin games
- e. masked dance-off: Three masked players from each tied team dance simultaneously against players from other tied teams in the Rhodes Lobby: to be judged by a select group of available players from other league divisions.
- f. flip of a coin

### **Overtime Format for Quarters, Semis and Finals**

1. Goalies will switch ends and remain in that end until the game is decided.
2. Teams will play 3-on-3 (plus a goalie) for 15 minutes running time. The last 2 minutes will be Stop Time. If still tied:
3. Shoot Out – 3 players from each team will be designated to shoot. If the outcome is already determined after 2 shooters from each team, the 3<sup>rd</sup> shooter will not shoot. If still tied after 3 shooters, teams will continue to alternate shooters until the tie is broken (in a 'sudden death' format). All players, including any pickup players, must take a turn before any player can take a second shot. Players serving their own penalty at the end of the game cannot participate in the Shoot Out.

### **Penalties in Overtime**

1. At no time will a team be forced to play with less than 3 skaters due to a penalty. Instead, the non-penalized team will add a player.

Example: Team A receives a minor penalty while the teams are playing 3-on-3. Team B adds a player and plays 4-on-3 for the duration of Team A's penalty. Team A's penalized player returns to the ice when her penalty expires. The teams will temporarily play 4-on-4 until the next whistle at which time they return to playing 3-on-3. If a second penalty is assessed to Team A before their first penalty expires, the teams will play 5-on-3.