

## LLFHL Divisional Grouping Playoff Rules and Procedures and Info on Championship Weekend

This document has been prepared to clarify requirements and situations. This document does not supercede the LLFHL rules as published. Should any discrepancy be noted between this document and the official LLFHL rules, the official LLFHL rules, as published, will govern.

### Divisional Grouping Playoffs

As indicated at the various League scheduling meetings, the regular season for Novice, Atom, Peewee, Bantam, Midget, Intermediate and Senior divisions will end upon completion of games Sunday January 31, 2010. No regular season games are to be played after the above dates, with the exception that in the event of inclement weather on the last weekend of the season that forces cancellation of games as per **Rule 11f**, the Executive reserves the right, in its sole judgment and discretion, to extend the season by one or two days to accommodate teams. Per **rule 11f 4**. to be eligible for playoffs and any League awards, teams must play all their regular season games

Playoff games can be played any time after January 31, 2010 and must be scheduled once the final standings are posted on the website. Playoff series may commence before this date if both teams have completed their regular season schedule, positions in the standings are set and cannot change with the results of other games and provided both teams agree.

Upon conclusion of the complete regular season all eligible teams will be ranked in each Divisional grouping based on their final point total (1(one) being the highest) at the end of the regular season. Teams that have been ruled ineligible to participate in playoffs by virtue of having been re-categorized up by the OWHA as per **Rule 5b** will be excluded from this ranking. Should two or more teams be tied in points, the tie will be broken in the same fashion as for the League Regular Season Championship (refer to posted document: **Regular Season Wrap Up Notice**).

A maximum of eight (8) teams in each grouping will qualify for the playoffs. The ranking determined prior to the start of the playoffs will be applied through all divisional grouping series. There will be no reseeding of teams should a lower ranked opponent defeat a higher ranked opponent. For groupings with fewer than 8 teams first round byes will be assigned to teams ranked #1, 2 and 3, as required.

All playoff formats will be posted on the LLFHL website and the results will be available through ITSports.

Once teams are advised of their next playoff opponent, either by the Head Convenor, the division convenor or through website posting, it is their responsibility to communicate with their opponent in order to schedule games. Note, the higher seeded team in a series does not have to open the series at home, but has first choice to do so. Doubleheaders are permissible if both teams agree and must meet the minimum separation requirements listed in the OWHA Handbook Rule Two (I) 18), page 36.

All games must be scheduled prior to the series starting. The higher seeded team in any series always receives the first option to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> game in a series. If a team is unable to furnish sufficient reasonable ice (defined as per the guidelines listed in **Rule 12**) to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> game prior to the series starting, the lower seeded team will then have the option to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> game. Teams hosting the third game must ensure they have sufficient ice to accommodate a 5-minute overtime plus shootout in addition to the regulation game. The team hosting the 3<sup>rd</sup> game will be responsible for the cost of ice and officials.

Each series must be completed by the specified completion date. Completion dates for all playoff series in all divisions are noted on the website as per **rule 19b**. These are to be strictly adhered to. **There will be no exceptions granted.**

All series will be best of 3 with 4 points being required to advance. The exception is if both teams end up tied with 3 points at the conclusion of regulation in the third game, the winner of the

Overtime or Shootout (if required) following the completion of the third game will advance. Teams receive 2 points for a regulation win, 1 point for a regulation tie and 0 points for a regulation loss.

Game lengths are the same as for regular season games, as per **Rule 13**.

NO curfews are allowed in playoffs, therefore each team must have sufficient ice to ensure games 1 and 2 are played to completion of regulation time and game 3 as below.

In the event of a serious injury that requires medical assistance resulting in the game being called by arena staff due to the expiry of the ice rental period or in the event of a power/mechanical failure that results in the game being called by arena staff due to the expiry of the ice rental period, the game shall be considered to be suspended at the point of the injury or power/mechanical failure. It will be the responsibility of the two teams to make arrangements to resume the suspended game prior to the series due date. The original home team will be the home team, unless they are unable to provide a reasonable ice time. If they are unable to provide a reasonable ice time the original visitor will have the option of hosting. The host team will be responsible for providing on-ice and off-ice officials. The game will commence at the point of the suspension of play. The original game sheet will continue to be used. There will be no additions to the roster. Penalties, including minors, misconducts and suspensions, will carry over.

One 30-second timeout will be permitted per team per game in all categories, divisions and groupings. Note this modification is to facilitate where applicable, playoff games being used for OWSHA Regional playdowns.

Games may end in ties including the third game in the series. To be clear, if the third game in a series is tied at the end of regulation time, it is considered a complete game as a tie. Overtime in a series is to be played only if the total points for each team is the same at the end of regulation time in the third game. For example, team A wins game 1, ties game 2 and ties game 3, then Team A advances with 4 points. If team A wins the first game, ties the second game and is trailing at the end of regulation of the third game, the series is considered tied at 3 points each and overtime is played to decide the series (not the game) winner.

Playoff games can be used for OWSHA playdowns provided the rules for both match. Teams should contact their Regional Director to confirm prior to playing.

All games in a series must be completed by the posted completion date; no exceptions. Should the series not be completed by the due date, the declared winner will be the team with the most accumulated points when the due date passes. Teams cannot refuse to schedule or reschedule games if reasonable ice is offered in order to try to take advantage of this rule. If a team is found to be doing so in the sole judgment of the Executive, and this has caused the series to pass the due date for completion, the team obstructing the scheduling will be declared to have lost the series. In the event that the teams are tied when the due date passes, a coin flip by a neutral party will decide the winner of the series.

Cancellation of games due to weather are allowed and are to be handled as per the provisions in **Rule 11 f)**. Cancellation of games due to insufficient officials in attendance as per **rule 10 c)** are allowed and are to be handled as indicated in **10c)**. Cancellation of scheduled playoff games for other reasons are not allowed unless specifically permitted by the Head Convenor only. Teams are responsible for notifying the Head Convenor and Division Convenor of any game changes as per **Rule 6** and are responsible for ensuring the schedule accessible through the website is correct as per **Rule 6**.

No pickups are allowed for playoffs with the exception noted in **Rule 7 c)**. This must be cleared through the Head Convenor prior to each game.

Groupings will play down through the brackets to the designated number of teams for Championship Weekend, as shown on the posted playoff structure charts.

There is no March Break blackout period but teams should endeavor to schedule their games to avoid this period and hence fights and arguments. Remember hockey is an honorable game.

Teams are reminded to immediately submit results in the same fashion as for the Regular Season and in accordance with the provisions of **Rule 15**.

Note that in scheduling referees for home games, **Rule 10** must be followed. Teams are referred to **Rule 10c** regarding games in which insufficient number of referees are present and protest provisions.

Per **Rule 2b**, to be eligible for League playoffs, all players must have played a minimum of five (5) Lower Lakes Female Hockey League (LLFHL) league games with their OWHHA registered/USA Hockey team prior to January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010, unless exemption has been granted by the League Executive. No requests for exemption will be considered after January 20<sup>th</sup> 2010.

### **Overtime**

If teams are tied in total series points at the conclusion of regulation time of the third game (at which point that game's result is considered final), the series winner will be decided by a 5-minute stop time Overtime following the conclusion of regulation time in the third game.

For the purposes of game recording and rosters, the game sheet for the third game will continue to be used. Players cannot be added to the roster for the overtime or shootout. Overtime will be played 5 on 5. Penalties, including minors, misconducts and suspensions, will carry over from the end of regulation time in the third game. Player substitution is allowed as per normal. The first team to score in the overtime will be declared the series winner.

If the teams are still tied following the conclusion of overtime, a 3-player cumulative shootout will determine the series winner.

### **Shootout rules**

Each team is responsible for designating its first six shooters on the third game gamesheet prior to the start of the third game. The shooting order will be designated by S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6 and must be followed. A player serving a penalty at the end of the overtime is ineligible to participate in the shootout and a replacement must be designated immediately prior to the shootout commencing. The six shooters must be different players.

The Home team will have the option of shooting first. The teams will alternate players shooting on the opposing goalie (i.e they don't shoot at the same time). All Hockey Canada rules applicable to penalty shots are to be followed (refer to Official Playing Rules 2008-2010 Rule 4.9, pages 31,32). All shooters will start out with the puck at center ice. Only the player participating in the shootout and the two goalies are to be on the ice during a shot.

Once the shot is completed the player must proceed to the penalty bench. It will be the responsibility of the timekeeper to keep track of the number of each shooter. It will be the responsibility of the Home team to ensure that the timekeeper is aware of their responsibilities.

If still tied after the 3-player shootout, a sudden victory shootout will take place. Each team will continue to send out a single player until one team scores and the other doesn't at which point the team scoring will be declared series winner.

A player can only shoot once until the smallest of the rosters of eligible players has been gone through completely (minus goalies) at which point the team with the larger roster may elect to have a player who has already shot shoot again. Teams are reminded to balance the best interests of the players against the need to win and that exclusion of players from participating may have more far-reaching impacts than would occur through the loss of a game.

### **Championship Weekend**

Teams which will qualify for Championship Weekend are indicated in the playoff structure posted on the website.

Qualifying teams are expected to show up for Championship Weekend game(s). If a team fails to show it will be considered to have forfeited the game(s) and will be subject to penalties as set down in **Rule 11**.

Championship Weekend is partially subsidized by the League and teams will be advised of monies due, payment procedure prior to the Championship Weekend.

Specific rules for Championship Weekend will be provided to qualifying teams.

**Conclusion**

**It is the responsibility of all teams to review and understand the complete LLFHL Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations for all rules regarding playoffs, player eligibility, etc.**

Thank you for your attention to this and good luck to all in the 2010 playoffs.

LLFHL  
January 19, 2010