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TCS HOCKEY TOURNAMENT RULES

(2025/26 Fall & Winter USA Hockey Events)

This is a USA Hockey Sanctioned Tournament in which all USA Hockey rules and penalties shall apply

All participating teams, players, and coaches must be certified with USA Hockey, the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association or the appropriate IIHF affiliate. All teams will need to provide the digital link to their certified team roster.

- All score sheets will be at the tournament headquarters at each assigned rink. Each team needs to bring enough labels for up to six games (18 labels) to be placed on the score sheets before each game. **A team representative for each team is required to fill out their roster prior to each game** and make appropriate changes or notations to the score sheet. Please stop by our tournament headquarters to pick up a copy of your score sheet. *Scoresheets will not be emailed out after the tournament.*

Game Rules

- **Games will start up to 15 minutes early. Please have your team ready to play 15 minutes before your scheduled time to avoid starting the game with a delay of game penalty.** The warm up clock WILL start 15 minutes before the scheduled start time. Teams will be issued a delay of game penalty if they are not ready to go once the warm up has concluded. **It is your team's responsibility to gauge the amount of time left in the game on the ice before yours!** Each game will feature an 8-10 minute ice cut before YOUR game, so please factor in the time. **This excludes the first game of the day on that ice sheet.*
- **10U to 14U divisions**
 - Immediate offsides
 - Prohibits icing while shorthanded
- **15U & above, Girls 16U & above, and High School Divisions**
 - Tag up/delayed offsides
 - Allows icing while shorthanded

- **NECK GUARDS ARE REQUIRED IN ALL DIVISIONS**

- Hockey Canada equipment rules are those recognized and subject to/by your governing body &/or as required by their own league or associations (i.e. mouth guards, neck guards, and all other equipment). Hockey Canada requires a BNQ Certified Throat Protector (neck guard) for all Youth Divisions. Hockey Canada rules do not mandate the wearing of a mouthpiece at any age division where a full mask is required.
- **Mouth Guards** - All players, including goalies in the 12u through 18U age divisions are required to wear a colored (non-clear) internal mouthpiece that covers all the remaining teeth of one jaw, customarily the upper. For the first violation of this mouthpiece rule, the team will be issued a warning. A misconduct penalty will be assessed to any player or goalie of that team for a second violation during that game.
- A maximum of four team officials may be on the player's bench at one time.
- **Each team will need to provide a penalty box official for each game.** This person becomes an off ice official & must remain neutral during the game & help the on ice officials, if needed. The tournament will provide the scorekeepers.
- **NO PARENTS OR MANAGERS ARE ALLOWED ON THE ICE!!! THIS INCLUDES CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES.**
- For all games, the home teams will wear it's white home jerseys and the away teams will wear it's dark colored away jersey. All players must wear numbered jerseys in the proper team colors. *TCS will have the final say if there is a conflict with jersey colors.*

Game Format

- (3) minute warm up for all levels. Teams must bring their own pucks.
- 8u Half-Ice = (2) 20 minute running-time periods with a horn sounding every (2) minutes for shift changes. *(See 8u Rules for more information)*
 - Boys 10u, 12u, & Girls 12U = (3) 12 minute stop-time periods
 - Boys 13u, 14u & Girls 14U = (3) 13 minute stop-time periods
 - Boys 16U/18U, Girls 16U/19U, & High School = (3) 14 minute stop-time periods
- A running clock will be used in the third period when a team is ahead by 5 or more goals. If the gap is closed to 4 goals, then stop time will resume.
- There will be No timeouts for Round Robin Games. Only Championship Games teams are allowed one timeout. Timeouts in overtime ARE allowed if the team has yet to use theirs.

Penalties

- 10u & 12u = 1:00 minute minor penalties
 - 13u & Above = 1:30 minute minor penalties
 - ALL DIVISIONS = 5:00 Major Penalties | 10:00 Misconducts
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- Any player receiving 4 or more penalties in one game is ejected & must sit the following game.
 - If a team receives 12 or more penalties in one game, the head coach is allowed to stay in that game, but must sit the following game.
 - 5 minute major penalties are converted to Game Misconducts.
 - Any players or coaches receiving a 5 minute Major or Game Misconduct must sit the following game.
 - Any players or coaches receiving a Match Penalty is disqualified from further play and will be ejected from the tournament
 - Fighting will not be tolerated and will result in 1 game suspension minimum, with a possible tournament ejection.
 - Any player who receives 2 (10) minute misconducts in the same game will be ejected from the remainder of that game and will sit the following game. The second ten minute misconduct is converted to a game misconduct.
 - Spitting will NOT be tolerated and may result in a tournament ejection.
 - Suspensions resulting from Game Misconducts, Match or Fighting Penalties will not be overturned by the tournament director under any circumstances. No tournament official has the right to change a score sheet or reverse a call from a referee. Video will not be reviewed to overturn calls. **Once the game is over, the score sheet is final.**
 - Any player who receives a major penalty, or a game misconduct of any kind, in a game, shall automatically be suspended from the balance of that game and his/her next game. USA Hockey Official Playing Rules shall govern the assessment of penalties.

Tournament Format

- Round-Robin Point System: 2 points for WIN & 1 point for TIE, & 0 for LOSS
 - Maximum goal differential attainable per game is +/-5.
 - **Please keep in mind our website does NOT factor in the max GD. We manually adjust standings after a team has played all of their round robin games. Once division is complete, all seeds will be updated.*
- Please see the "TCS Goal Differential" on our rules page for more information.*

- Tie game system – a tie will remain a tie in round-robin play and all consolation games.
- Any forfeited games will be recorded as a 3-0 score. Any forfeited games affecting other teams in terms of playoff status, may be reviewed by the tournament committee to determine which teams advance beyond robin play.
- No player is allowed to participate on more than one team in his/her respective age division.
 - EX: Player is not allowed to play in 10u A & 10u B. Player can play in 10u B and play up in 12u B
- At the conclusion of each game, the coach of each team shall be responsible for reviewing the score sheet to determine whether any player or team official has been suspended or disqualified from participating in any future game.
- Games can be stopped and ended at any time if our officials or tournament directors feel that continuing play is considered to be not in the best interest of the tournament and everyone involved.
- Officials will be informed to be very strict regarding our zero tolerance policy. TCS Hockey &/or rink management reserves the right to remove from the rink – players, coaches, or spectators who violate our zero tolerance policies. Any coach or spectator that gets removed in a game will receive a full tournament suspension.
- Protests will not be accepted based on the judgements or calls made by an on-ice official. However, a game may be protested based on the opponent's use of an ineligible player, or on a violation of rules or protocol that clearly has an impact on the game and that inures to the detriment of youth hockey. Any such protest must be filed by the protesting team as soon as possible by referring to our tournament director for their consideration done by the Coaches & Manager. If the tournament director determines that the circumstances warrant it, he may uphold the protest and assess the appropriate penalties against the offending team. Video will not be watched to overturn calls. The tournament director's decision in any such matters will be final.

SEEDING TIE BREAKERS

Tie breaker system – Teams ending up with the same amount of points in round-robin play, final standings will be determined by the following criteria:

- Head to Head competition*
- Most Wins
- Best Goal Differential
- Fewest Goals Against
- Most Goals For
- Fewest Penalty Minutes (*Game Misconducts=10 Minutes*)
- Coin Flip

- **In the event of 3 or more teams tied; All teams that are tied must ALL have played each other to determine a clear head to head winner. If not applicable, we will move past Head to Head and continue the tie-breaker criteria. We will NOT restart the tie-breaker criteria from the top again. Please see TCS Tie Breakers on our Rules Page for more information.*

PLAYOFF & CHAMPIONSHIP OVERTIME

COACHES MUST KNOW THE OVERTIME RULES. Referees will NOT explain the rules after regulation.

There will be NO INTERMISSION after regulation.

Coaches asking for the rules may result in delay of game penalty to start the overtime!

- *Tie game system – a tie will remain a tie in round-robin play and all consolation games.*
- **For all playoff & championship games if tied after regulation play:**
 - NO INTERMISSION
 - One (5) five minute running sudden death overtime. Last minute is STOP time.
 - 4 on 4
 - The teams will switch sides so that each team is defending the goal farthest from their bench.
 - If a penalty occurs, we will go to 4 on 3. If another penalty occurs during that time frame from the same penalized team we will start 5 on 3 until the next stoppage of play.

For all playoff & championship games If tied after the overtime period:

- 3 Player Shootout in which most goals wins
- Home team will decide who shoots first
- If tied after the 3 player shootout, then go to a sudden death shootout until the winner is decided.
- The players in the first group of three may not shoot again until all other eligible players on their team have had a turn or the opposing team has used all of their shooters. *Ex: If Team B has 12 Players and Team A has 14, Team A can repeat players after the 12th shooter.*
- *Players who are currently serving a penalty when the overtime ends will NOT be allowed to shoot.*

CHAMPIONSHIP CELEBRATION/PHOTO

NO PARENTS OR MANAGERS ARE ALLOWED ON THE ICE DURING CHAMPIONSHIP CELEBRATIONS/PHOTOS!!!

Following our championship games, TCS staff will come onto the ice to hand out the 1st & 2nd Place Cups & Medals. The cup will be placed on the teams respective blue line. Please have your players line up for a photo, THEN we will pass the medals out.

Players may take helmets/gloves/sticks off, but must put them back on immediately after the photo as we need to get the Zamboni back on the ice. Unfortunately, there will be NO skating around the ice with the cup.

Anything not covered here shall be directed to the tournament directors. TCS will have the final say on any and all matters.