



ONTARIO WOMEN'S HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

**Eastern League OFFICIAL PLAYOFF INFORMATION
2025 – 2026 SEASON**



The OWHL Championship weekend on March 28 and March 29th, 2026, will consist of a League Championship game and a Tier II Championship game for each age group and level.

Teams that finish the season in 1st to 4th place in their division will play in the **League Playoff Championship**.

Teams that place from 5th to 8th place in their division will be playing for the **Tier II Playoff Championships**.

- Team recategorization by the OWHA – If a team was recategorized “up”, the team will **NOT** be eligible for the OWHL playoffs.
- If a team was recategorized “down,” the team will be eligible to participate in playoffs within its regular-season division, provided it finishes within the applicable qualifying positions (1st–4th for League Championship or 5th–8th for Tier II Championship).
- In some divisions, 5th and/or 6th place teams may be included to support a Tier II playoff group where other divisions have fewer teams.

The OWHA recognizes that there will be some loops that will have less than 8 teams in their division, which means the remaining teams (not in the 1st – 4th place) would be eligible to be in the Tier II division.

The OWHA also recognizes that there will be more than 8 teams in a loop, and those teams (not in 5th – 8th place) will **not** be eligible to play for the Tier II division.

Example:

#1. Loops that have more than 8 teams (example 12 teams):

- 1st – 4th place will be competing in the League Championship Playoffs.
- 5th – 8th place will be competing in the Tier II Championship Playoffs.
- 9th – 12th place will not qualify for playoffs, and their season will be complete at the end of the regular season.

#2. Loops that have less than 8 teams (example 7 teams):

1st – 4th place will be competing in the League Championship Playoffs.

5th – 7th place will be competing in the Tier II Championship Playoffs.

There may be age divisions that the Tier II championship may not be run due to the number of teams in the overall division.

THERE ARE NO PICK-UPS PERMITTED DURING THE OWHL PLAYOFFS – Emergency exemption for goalies ONLY.

Should the home team need to **change any details of a scheduled game**, they are to notify the opposing team as well as update said information in **RAMP** so that the OWHA website is updated.



PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- a) Eligibility for Playoffs and Championship:
 - A Player must have been rostered with the specific team on or before December 31, 2025, to be eligible for the Playoffs and Championship Weekend.
 - They must play at **least 3 games** before January 15th to be eligible for League Playoffs and Championship Weekend.
- b) Pickup players are not eligible for Playoff games or Championship games. However, in certain circumstances, a team may be permitted to pick up a goaltender.
 - If a team's goaltender is injured or unavailable for a legitimate reason, that team must apply, with proper documentation, to the OWHA Office for permission to pick up a goaltender.
 - The OWHA Registrar will decide whether to grant such permission.
 - If permission is granted, the team's designated goaltenders will be ineligible to play.
 - The pickup goaltender must be currently registered with an OWHA team, either in the same category or a lower one.
- c) Individuals under suspension are not permitted to participate.

MATCHUPS AND PLAYOFFS

Playoff Rounds Dates of Completion

Most age categories will consist of one or two divisions in their group. Please refer to the Playoff bracket document for rounds and dates to be completed.

- Playoffs start February 23 and end March 25, 2026

Game Rules

- There will be a three (3) minute warm up prior to each game, starting as soon as the ice resurfacer gates are closed, but no earlier than thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- One 30 second timeout will be permitted per team/per game in all categories of OWHL League and Consolation Championships. This one timeout may take place in regulation or overtime.
- Points will be awarded as follows: two (2) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie and no points for a loss.
- The home team will wear their dark-colored sweaters. Goalies must dress in the same sweater color as the team is wearing. Any conflict in sweater color will result in the home team having to change.
- Playoff game length remains the same as regular season games.

THERE ARE NO CURFEWS FOR PLAYOFF GAMES (the game is allowed to continue until it is finished, even if it runs past the originally scheduled end time for that ice slot). If teams agree to curfew ice within their division because there is a shortage of ice, we will allow this to happen as long as there is an email between both teams and leagues is also on the email thread.



Game Sheets/Game Reporting

- Rosters will be pulled from RAMP. Any player signed after December 31st is NOT eligible to participate. It is the responsibility of each team to ensure any players signed after December 31st do NOT participate in any playoff game. These players must be marked as 'Not Playing' on the electronic game sheet for any playoff games.
- No players may be added, and no pick-up players are permitted for playoffs or League and Consolation Championship.
- Teams must schedule their playoff games on the RAMP Games Portal. These games are to be scheduled under the **LEAGUE GAMES** tab. When scheduling a playoff game, you will be required to choose a game type, please select **PLAYOFFS**. ONLY your **HOME** games should be scheduled on the **RAMP Games Portal**.
- Teams may use a game that counts as both a playdown game and a playoff game, if both teams agree and send an email to both **provincials@owha.on.ca** and **leagues@owha.on.ca**. These games must follow OWHL Playoff eligibility requirements and protocols and have prior approval from the league.

Tie Breakers Game Points

Win - 2 points Tie - 1 point Loss - 0 points.

If tied in points, the following tiebreakers will be followed:

- i. Number of wins.
- ii. Record against other tied teams.
- iii. Goals scored minus the goals against in series.
- iv. Fewest goals allowed in the series.
- v. Most periods won in series.
- vi. Fewest penalty minutes in series.
- vii. First goal scored in a series.
- viii. Flip of a coin.

In the case of more than two teams, tiebreakers will follow the numerical order until all ties are broken.

Game Lengths

Teams in the OWHL - Eastern Divisions and Categories to follow:

- The following divisions will play 10-10-12.
 - All U9
 - All U11
 - U13 A, BB, B, C
 - U15 B, C
 - U18 B, C
- The following divisions will play 15-15-20
 - All U22
 - U18 AA, A, BB
 - U15 AA, A, BB
 - U13 AA



Rescheduling Due To Inclement Weather Only

- In the event a playoff game must be rescheduled due to inclement weather, the process will follow the 2025–26 OWhA Rules and Regulations. Where there is any inconsistency, OWhA policy will prevail over this Playoff Information document.
- Once the new date and time have been agreed upon, please email leagues@owha.on.ca with the details.

Timeouts

- Playoff games MUST NOT be curfewed.
- Overtime procedures, where applicable, are outlined below.
- There will be one 30 second timeout per team per game as per Hockey Canada Playing Rules.

Discipline

- OWhA discipline is in place. All suspensions must be reported to stats@owha.on.ca as per the OWhA DISCIPLINE and PROCEDURES.
- Any participant under suspension is not permitted to participate with the team in any team related activities.
- OWhA will suspend and/or remove participants and/or teams for violations of OWhA requirements or for actions that are not consistent with the OWhA Values and Code of Conduct.
- Decisions of the OWhA are final and binding on all teams.

THERE IS NO RE-SEEDING – The higher seeded team in each series will have the first choice to host a second home game, if needed.

Playoff Series Winners

The winner of the round will be the **FIRST** team that gets **4 POINTS IN THEIR SERIES**. The OWhA will advance the series winner in the brackets on our website (owha.on.ca).

The first two games **CAN** end in a tie with **NO OVERTIME**; however, **ALL** teams should allow for an extra half an hour of ice for **GAME 3** in the case that a tie must be broken by the means of a 4th period and if needed, a shootout.

Examples of 4 points in the series.

- **Example one**
 - One team wins both the first and second games. No third game is required.
- **Example two**
 - Each team wins one game each, the third game is played, and one team wins that third game. Series is over.
- **Example three**
 - Each team ties the first two games, going into the third game one team wins the game. Series is over.



- **Example four**
 - One team wins one game and ties another game; that team then ties the third game and wins the series.
- **Example five**
 - Both teams tie all three games; a 10-minute period is then played, and the team that wins that period wins the series. No shootout is required.
- **Example six**
 - Both teams tie all three games; a 10-minute period is then played no team wins the period. A shootout will then take place after that period. The winner of the shot out wins the series. Please review shoot out rules below.

If a 10-minute fourth period is required following Game 3, all penalties and suspensions will carry over and remain in effect.

Home Team Determination – Two-Team Divisional Rounds

- The home team shall be determined by the team's final regular season ranking.
- If both teams ended in the same position, then a coin toss will be conducted by the league office to determine home team.
- Examples of how a home team would be determined are as follows.
 - Team A finished 2nd in their division and Team B finished 4th in their division (Team A would be home team)
 - Teams A finished 1st in their division and Team B finished 1st in their division, a flip of a coin at the league office will determine the home team.

Game Length and Overtime

- Playoff game length remains the same as regular season games.
- There are **no curfews** for playoff games
- **ALL** minor penalties, misconduct and suspensions carry into the 4th period **AND** shootout.
- **ONE** 30 second timeout is permitted per game; If not used in regulation time, the timeout can be used during overtime.
- Game #1 and Game #2 **CAN** end in a tie.
- If a winner is not determined by the end of regulation time in the **3RD** game, a **10-minute 4TH period** will be played in its entirety (stop time), **FOUR ON FOUR**. If the game is still tied, the game will then go to a shootout.



Shootout Rules

1. Each team must designate their first five shooters (S1, S2, S3, S4, S5) **PRIOR** to the start of the third game on the game sheet – These shooters **MUST** be different players, and the order listed **MUST** be followed.
2. A player serving a penalty at the end of overtime is **INELIGIBLE** to partake in the shootout, and a replacement player must be appointed in their place.
3. The home team will have the option of shooting first. The teams will then alternate the players shooting on the opposing goalie – They **DO NOT** shoot at the same time.
4. Once the player completes their shot, they are to proceed to the penalty box. It is the responsibility of the timekeeper to keep track of the players' numbers, and it will be the responsibility of the home team to ensure the timekeeper is aware of their responsibilities.
5. If still tied after the shootout, a sudden victory shootout will take place. Each team will send out one player at a time until one team scores, and the other does not.

LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP AND Tier II (CONSOLATION) CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION

- The 2025 OWHL League Championships and Consolation Championships are currently scheduled for March 28-29, 2026. Ice is currently blocked at multiple facilities.
- **OWHA reserves the right** to interpret and update the material above and make decisions as it deems appropriate for the OWHL Playoffs and the League and Tier II Championship games.
- *THERE ARE NO EXTENSIONS TO ANY ROUNDS unless both teams are available for an earlier start.*
- **ALL HOCKEY CANADA RULES APPLICABLE TO PENALTY SHOTS ARE TO BE FOLLOWED – Refer to official playing rules in the rule book, Rule 4.9.**

We thank everyone involved for their cooperation and support in providing a fair and supportive playoff series for all participants. We wish everyone well and are available to assist as required.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email leagues@owha.on.ca