

## Empire Playoffs 2018

### 1.) General / Miscellaneous:

- a. **#1 RULE – all games should be consistently run. Same curfew, same shootout procedure, etc.**  
Consistency is more important than technicalities of the rules but if screw up, consult with President or VP or an experienced Commissioner 1st.
- b. **Make sure rink and refs know this is an Empire playoff game and you are the Commissioner and are there to help/coordinate.**
- c. You OR a designated (& trained) representative (not a head coach or manager of a team within the division) must be present for all games. This is mainly so shootouts are run correctly!
- d. All playoff games are curfewed. Curfews MUST be consistent. Watch the rink personnel to make sure they do not try to make up time after shootouts. Only the Championship Games are NOT curfewed.
- e. Games end at curfew or when all 3 periods are completed, whichever is EARLIER.
- f. Tied playoff games proceed directly to a Shootout. No overtime is allowed EVEN if curfew time is left!
- g. Commissioners MUST always be NEUTRAL even if your child is playing.
- h. All Empire Rules that apply to regular Season game also apply to Playoffs! Playoffs are NOT a new season so penalty minutes/Aggressive Play/Game Misconducts counts are NOT reset.
- i. Home team is responsible for uniform conflicts. If you have or can get a set of pinneys, bring them. The threat that a team has to wear them generally solves any issues/whining. Tell the coaches this beforehand.
- j. Home team is always the higher seeded team (even if the #8 team upsets #1 and is playing #4).
- k. NO timeouts ALLOWED – playoff games are curfewed. USA Hockey rule. Exception: Championships.
- l. Any child 18 or younger MUST wear a helmet when on the bench, penalty box or scorekeeper/timekeeper area. USA Hockey rule.
  - i. This includes players not playing due to injury, drinking water, backup goaltenders or between periods.
- m. No cell phone usage by coaches (limited to emergencies) or players. Note that suspended coaches have tried this to give directions to coaches on the bench.
- n. Commissioners should carry cell phones and call for help if there are issues.
- o. **No noisemakers** (whistles, horns, rattles, vocalization etc.)
- p. **Commissioners can not interrupt games** but can point out BIG issues to refs at stoppages between periods. Should introduce yourself before the game – let them know you are available if issues occur (Shootout, rink issues, injuries). Hopefully the only time you will be needed (or seen) is IF there is a shootout.
- q. **Injuries & Rink issues:** Stop the curfew clock for major rink issues (example: glass falls out or breaks) or major injuries (requiring ambulance – any doubt, call an ambulance – note liability). Consult with referees and get their input. Note issue on scoresheet. Coordinate with rink on rink fix, ambulance call & curfew.
- r. **Neck guards & Mouth guards** – are required for all payers. Referees will only enforce mouth guards at PW & above level as are USA mandated. Mouth guards for Mites & Squirts and Neck guards are optional per USA hockey. You can point this out to coaches before/after games – threaten notification of Empire Reps.
- s. **Protests** – immediately call President & VP. **Referee issues are NOT protestable.** Not much you can do if refs do not run shootout correctly (common error is allowing goalies to cheat to cut down on angles).
- t. **Game Misconducts:** (Especially for fighting.) Should request that all PW & above teams have the players escorted from the ice doorway to the locker room and wait until the player is dressed and calmed down. This avoids off-ice issues. Managers can do this. Good coaches will automatically send an Assistant Coach with the player. This also avoids having parents re-wind the player up (having upset parents screaming at the player leads to issues). Only rinks with physical separation of players (like ESL #1) can avoid this. Note that referees are trained to NOT leave the ice surface (discuss why....).
- u. **Locker Rooms:** Work with the rink to have locker rooms physically separated and that they avoid having players cross or be physically close to each other when leaving – be aware of potential issues and work with rink/referees to minimize. Players should always use a separate door when leaving and NOT be forced to cross underneath/in front of opposing teams parents if possible. Note that referees can hold one teams players until other team is in locker room (and will generally do this if asked before the game).
- v. **Off-ice Officials:** See discussion under Game Day. **Need to arrange for IN ADVANCE!**

### 2.) Scheduling:

- a. Should have all ice times already. No team should have to play late one night and early the next (if possible) – make sure schedule is reasonable. Your home org should have requested referees to be scheduled by now from RIHOA.

- b. Coaches may request accommodation to move from one game slot to another. If all teams in the switch agree, then allow it. Do not kill yourself to do so & do not tell them they can request changes. **Goalie sub issues are the highest priority change issue – accommodate as #1.** Commissioners may request accommodation if they have children playing or are coaching in other divisions – can not force ice changes but can be put into slots to accommodate their playoffs as much as possible. One of 2 advantages of being a Commissioner (you should get to see your kid play in their playoffs if the ice slots allow it).
- c. If you have single games scheduled for weeknights, be aware that these are NOT prime ref assignments so may get ref complaints. Refs like 2 or 3 games at a time.
- d. Conflicts with Tournaments & Winter Break:
  - i. Teams are required to participate and not have conflicts with Tournaments or scrimmages.
  - ii. If parents go on vacation, not much we can do about it. Substitutes in playoffs are allowed to get to 10 players & goalie. See substitute rules – make sure you understand them.
  - iii. High School Varsity & JV conflicts are common. May get coach requests for accommodation.
- e. Younger age divisions will get younger refs – expect to have to help them more with shootouts.
- f. ALL GAME SLOTS MUST BE THE SAME. CURFEW must be the same for all games.
- g. Championship Games:
  - i. Host org to re-confirm times! Schedule posted on website schedule.
  - ii. Games are NOT curfewed and have been scheduled for longer slots.
  - iii. Refs – scheduled by RIHOA by Host Org Ice Scheduler.
  - iv. Host Org will supply Timekeeper (EAHC Board members may volunteer to help out). Commissioner or Empire Board member is scorekeeper (never use teams involved). Host org: music & announcing.
  - v. Penalty Box attendants are from teams.
  - vi. Late arriving players need to be watched for especially in some rink locations.
  - vii. President does presentations (trophies & medals) after Game with assistance from Commissioner. Be prepared to make a short speech thanking both teams for a wonderful season and playoffs... Coaches take microphone to call up every player. No speeches!
- h. Tie-Breakers to determine seeding. See Guidebook (website is NOT correct in all cases and only applies 3 rules). If have a 3 or 4 way tie, confirm before announcing (to ensure reasoning is correct).
- i. **WEATHER:** All playoff games are played as scheduled unless the county closes the roads or the rinks close.
- j. **OTHER RESCHEDULE Requests:** Commissioners have game slots, use them. Not rescheduling for coach convenience or family vacations even if team offers to cover costs.

### 3.) Eligible Players (& coaches):

- a. All teams who have turned in a USA Hockey roster. All of the players listed on the USA Hockey Roster.
- b. Player not listed on USA Hockey roster – not eligible.
- c. Team with no USA Hockey Roster – has never happened (YET). Could be a forfeit situation. Needs discussion. Note that teams will need this for tournaments in March!
- d. USA Hockey Roster is the only way Empire knows they have insurance and the team is legal – it is the reason we require them.
- e. Suspensions – Players serving USA Hockey (i.e. Game or Match penalty) or Empire (Aggressive play, penalty minute or 3 Majors) suspensions are not eligible to play until their suspensions have been completed.
  - i. Note some JV Games are USA Hockey – we do honor USA Hockey suspensions from them and they are supposed to honor ours. There is no formal method of handing off.
  - ii. Varsity Games are NOT USA Hockey.
  - iii. Players/Coaches serving suspensions may NOT be on the bench, penalty box or serve as off-ice officials. They may sit with the spectators. Are not required to be physically present (up to parent & coach) and SHOULD NOT sign the scoresheet. If they desperately want to show that they were there; then let them initial the suspension notice in the comments area.

### 4.) Day of Playoff/Championship Games:

- a. Arrive early – at least 45 minutes before game start. Dress warmly. It can be a long day. Bring snacks.
- b. Check locker room assignments for issues!
- c. Teams should be warned that they should be ready to play at least 15-20 minutes early. May need to accommodate rink or Zamboni issues or shootouts. Warn refs that games will keep moving.
- d. SHOOTOUT PREP: Use Index cards or sheets of paper to collect the shooters (5) and 2 alternates from coaches **BEFORE the game starts.**
- e. SCORESHEETS:
  - i. Commissioners supply the scoresheet w/ all names filled out. Some Commissioners generate stickers.
  - ii. You need to know about ANY Subs and check that they are legal BEFORE the game starts.

- iii. All players in Bantam & above must sign the scoresheet for every game in playoffs. You may want to count the signatures vs the players on-ice during warmups (Highly Recommended to avoid protests). Note that Squirts should put a line next players not playing - note that lining out a player does NOT prevent them from playing should they arrive late but scorekeeper should be notified.
- iv. Late arriving players - Note that any late arriving players need to sign (if Bantam or above) the scoresheet before playing a shift. If you have all eligible players listed, then there is NO penalty for the player to sign and then play. If the player is NOT listed, it is a MINOR PENALTY that is assessed to the team (and almost guaranteed protest!). This is one reason Commissioners put ALL eligible players on the scoresheet even if the coach tells you he will not show up.
- v. All Coaches must sign & give their CEP # on the scoresheet before the game.
- vi. Check the scoresheet for issues BEFORE each game starts.
- vii. **Make sure Scorebox has a copy of TIE game procedure from Guidebook, Playoff Section for refs to consult in case Commissioner gets tied up elsewhere.**
- f. Off-ice Officials – need to be reminded are NEUTRAL & work at the direction of On-ice Officials:
  - i. Penalty Box Attendants:
    - 1. One Supplied by each team (Home & Away).
    - 2. Must be a legal & well-behaved adult (18 year old players / older brothers NOT recommended). This is a USA Hockey rule.
    - 3. They should try to keep the players calm.
  - ii. Timekeeper & Scorekeeper Options (be consistent & make sure are qualified):
    - 1. Commissioner is one and a trusted/qualified friend/spouse (NEUTRAL) does the other
    - 2. Timekeeper from one team & Scorekeeper from the other (works best at ESL, TC and Webster as Timekeeping equipment is consistent, may work for others too). Most timekeepers can handle it if they have some experience and 5 minutes of practice during the ice cut. If you can, find a set of instructions for your rink and POST them (if not already there).
- g. Find a bunch of QUALIFIED parents from the host org to fill these jobs and work out a schedule. Can be parents from team in playoffs but must be NEUTRAL when working games.
  - 1. Commissioner is timekeeper and Home or Away team supplies Scorekeeper. Away team is lower seed and less likely to win so less likely to manipulate scoresheet.
  - 2. Whatever option you choose – watch carefully to make sure there are no issues and they stay NEUTRAL. Watch that aggressive play penalties are recorded correctly.
  - 3. Note that if games do not overlap, then Commissioner and one other trusted/neutral person works the best as no one can question consistency or neutrality.
  - 4. Make sure you know how to timekeep (at least the basics) just in case someone does not show up or team's choice is incompetent.

**5.) Shootouts: (See rules in Guidebook – Have extra copies. This is a summary!)**

- a. Referees should depend on you to make sure the correct players are shooting in the correct order. You may hand them your cards/sheets with the names & #s or they may make you grab each kid in the right order. Ask them how they want you to help with this. Shootouts are a lot of work for the refs. Only players participating in shootout at that moment are on the ice.
- b. Referees run the shootout & make the goal/no goal calls.
- c. Home team chooses whether to go first or last. One time choice. 1<sup>st</sup> Shootout - 5 shooters. Whomever has the most after 5 shoot for both teams, wins. If tied go to Second-round (see below).
- d. Second round is sudden-victory. Home team chooses to go 1<sup>st</sup> or last. Same 5 shooters as 1<sup>st</sup> Shootout Round. Team A shoots once and scores and Team B misses, team A wins. If both score or both miss, then shooter #2 for Team A and then Team B shoot. If both score or both miss, ... until the tie is broken. I have had this go to 12 shooters (5 in 1<sup>st</sup> round and 7 in sudden-victory round).
- e. Shootout Alternates – only used if:
  - i. A player is injured.
  - ii. A player is in the penalty box (for a minor, major or misconduct) or has been ejected (game or Match penalty). Example: Player C gets a penalty with 30 seconds left in a tie game. He is the scheduled #3 shooter (#1 A, #2 B, #3 C, #4 D, #5 E, Alt #1 F, Alt #2 G). Team would shoot #1 (A), #2 (B), #4 (D), #5 (E) Alt #1 (F). Player C (#3 shooter) is ineligible for shootout.
  - iii. Empire suspensions (ex: 5<sup>th</sup> Ag Play) do not take effect until the scoresheet is signed and the game is over.
  - iv. Player's serving that game as a suspension are ineligible and should not be on the list.

6.) After Playoff each day:

- a. Post or email out results.
- b. If have finalists, email President, VP, webmaster and Championship Host org Rep with Team names (Home & Away)
- c. Determine if have any suspensions to carry-over

**Commissioner Checklist (Day of Playoffs):**

- 1.) Schedule
- 2.) Scoresheets with rosters (stickers or handwritten by Commissioner)
- 3.) COPIES of Shootout Out, tiebreaker procedures, one per scoreboard
- 4.) COPY of Empire Guidebook
- 5.) EAHC President & VP Phone #s plus at least one backup (officer or Commissioner)
- 6.) Pinneys for uniform issues
- 7.) Shootout Sheets/Index Cards or whatever you are using to have coaches record shooters BEFORE each game.
- 8.) Weather report.
- 9.) Scorekeeper & Timekeeper assignments (who is doing what & backup plan)