

Northern California Youth Hockey Association

2019 Playoff Rules

1. Scope. These rules define the eligibility and qualifications of teams and players to participate in the Northern California Youth Hockey Association (NORCAL) playoffs, the conduct of the playoffs, and the determination of the playoff winners and NORCAL team entries into the California Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) Playoffs. In addition to the rules contained herein, the current *USA Hockey Official Playing Rules*, the current *USA Hockey Annual Guide*, and the current *CAHA Guidebook* shall apply. Any conflict between these rules and the CAHA or USA Hockey Guides shall be resolved in favor of, first, USA Hockey Annual Guide, then CAHA Guidebook.

2. Determining Champions (2019). The NORCAL champion shall be determined as follows: The four qualifying teams in each division (or other number if specified by the NORCAL Board at the start of the current season) shall play each other once in a round-robin. In a round-robin, teams will receive two (2) points for each win, one (1) point for each tie, and zero (0) points for each loss. (See section 24 for tiebreakers) At the end of the round-robin, the teams will be seeded in order of finish achieved in the tournament. The first-place team after the round-robin will automatically qualify for the Championship Game; the second-place team after the round-robin will play the third-place team after the round-robin in a semi-final game. The winners of the semi-final game will play the first place finisher in the round robin. The winner of that game will be the NORCAL Champion and the loser of that game will be the runner up. The champion and runner up will move on to CAHA playoffs.

3. Tournament Director. The NORCAL General Manager (GM) shall be the Tournament Director (TD) and in charge of the playoffs and will have the sole power to render decisions regarding the playoffs. The GM may designate a representative to act as TD in his/her absence. The GM is also responsible for disseminating all necessary information to the participants and for making all arrangements for a successful conduct of this event. The GM shall appoint assistants such that each playoff game will be supervised by a 'Game Director'.

4. Team Eligibility. Refer to NORCAL Rule 8.2 for the number of games required for a team to be eligible to participate in the NORCAL Playoffs. In addition, the team must have been properly registered with USA Hockey and NORCAL and must belong to a club that is in good standing with NORCAL. The GM, based on information provided by the NORCAL Registrar, Statistician and other NORCAL officials, shall determine team eligibility prior to the playoffs. See also, Playoff Rule 28.

5. Player Eligibility. Refer to NORCAL Rule 8.3 for the number of games required for a player to be eligible to participate in the NORCAL Playoffs. Players who are not properly registered to play with the qualifying team or who were released from the team after the player movement deadline are ineligible to participate. A player must serve any and all outstanding suspensions before participating in any NORCAL Playoff game. Any games in which an improperly rostered or otherwise illegal player participates shall be ruled as a forfeit against the team allowing such player to play. At his sole discretion, the TD may grant emergency goalie exceptions.

6. Team Qualification. The teams that shall participate in these playoffs shall be determined as follows: At the end of the regular season, the GM, based upon the data provided by the Statistician and/or NORCAL website, shall determine the top ranked teams in each division. The top ranked teams shall be entered into these playoffs. The GM shall be responsible for notifying the clubs of the relative standings of the teams for purposes of playoffs.

6.1 Protests against the GM's decision concerning rankings must be presented in writing to the GM by the club President not later than twenty-four (24) hours after the publication of the final season standings for purposes of these playoffs. Protests shall be resolved by a committee consisting of the NORCAL President, the GM and the Statistician.

6.2 Except for teams or clubs that are members of NORCAL but not members of CAHA (such as teams registered in the state of Nevada), as described in Section 23, playoff participation presumes a commitment on the part of all teams to compete in the CAHA Playoffs. Refusal to so compete will result in a fine of \$1,000 charged to the club subject to Board review. This fine will be applied to the substitute team's entry fee with any surplus going to the NORCAL Treasury.

7. Ranking. The final team rankings will be based on all scheduled league "G" games only. These rankings shall be determined by the GM based on the official game scores provided by the Statistician. Games that are forfeits shall count as 'one to zero' in favor of the non-forfeiting team.

1. If two or more teams in the same division are tied for rank, their position in the standings shall be determined by the Tie Breaker procedure specified in the 2018 *USA Hockey Tournament Guidebook* P.33 under ***Youth, Girls'/Women's And High School Varsity and/or Prep School – Tie Breaking Rules to Determine Standings Position***

8. Location and Dates. The playoff games shall be conducted at Sharks Ice – San Jose March 15-17, 2019

9. Progress of Playoffs. The playoff games shall be played according to the schedule published by the General Manager.

10. Home/Away Teams. For each game in the official schedule, one team is designated as the home team, and the other team is designated as the away team. Home/Away designations in a preliminary round will be based on regular season standings with the home team always being the team finishing higher in the standings. For championship games, the home team shall be the team finishing higher in the preliminary round.

1. The home team wears white and the away team shall wear a contrasting color. With permission of the Tournament Director, the teams may agree in advance to an alternate color plan. Both teams must agree; no team may impose such an alternate plan without the consent of the opponent.
2. After the post-game handshake, the away team must exit the ice first. Once the away team has left the rink area, the home team shall immediately exit the ice.

11. Team Officials. Each team official on the bench must be listed on the team roster.

1. Other than rostered players participating in the game, no more than a total of four other persons including coaches and injured players not playing are allowed on the team bench during a playoff game.

12. Coaches. All coaches on the bench shall have current valid USA Coaching Certification at the minimum credentials required by USA Hockey for that age level. The coach and all assistant coaches (if present on the bench) must sign the scoresheet in the appropriate area. Coaches failing to sign the score sheet will be suspended for the next playoff game. If coaches on the bench have not signed the score sheet and are challenged by opposing coaches the offending coaches will be removed from the bench.

13. Off-Ice Officials. The tournament hosting club is required to provide timekeeper, scorekeeper and penalty box officials. Off-Ice officials may include adults from the participating teams.

13.1 These off-ice officials shall be available a minimum of ten (10) minutes before each game and remain after each game to help resolve potential disciplinary problems.

13.2 The Tournament Director or designee reserves the right to approve off-ice officials before a game.

14. Scoresheets. NORCAL will provide score sheets with header information filled in. Each participating team is required to provide score sheet stickers containing the names and numbers of all eligible players and the names of the coaches. Upon completion of a game, all copies of the score sheets will be returned to the GM, from whom the team manager or coach may pick up the team's copy.

15. Game Start Time. The first game of each day will start at the time designated on the schedule included with these rules. Teams scheduled must be available and prepared to start their games twenty minutes prior to their scheduled start time. Championship games will start at their published start times.

16. Length of Periods. Each game shall consist of three periods of fifteen minutes for all divisions. Preliminary round game slots will be sufficient to complete the game accommodating reasonable delays in the conduct of the game, including overtime and shoot-outs if called for by the tournament format.

17. Running Time. If at any time during a game, the goal differential reaches seven (7), the game clock will be set on running time commencing with the next drop of the puck. Once running time commences, the game will be completed under running time. During running time the game clock shall stop for the following events only:

1. Goal scored;
2. Penalty awarded

3. Injured player on the ice.

18. Overtime. In the event of a tie at the conclusion of regulation time during a semi-final/knock-out game or Championship game, the game will continue with consecutive ten (10) minute sudden-death overtime periods until a winner is determined. Teams will switch ends before each overtime period and an ice cut may be executed after the second overtime period, at the discretion of the Tournament director factoring equally condition of the ice and tournament schedule.

19. Time Outs. Each team is allowed one one-minute time out per game.

20. Time Between Games. Normally, teams will have at least four hours from the scheduled end of one game to the scheduled beginning of another game on the same day or twelve hours between the scheduled end of a game on one day and the scheduled beginning of a game on the next day. When less than these normal intervals are required by exceptional scheduling considerations, notice to the teams will be given at the publication of the event schedule.

21. Tournament Discipline Committee. A tournament discipline committee will review actions to be taken against a player or team official who receives a game misconduct or match penalty during the playoffs. The purpose of the disciplinary committee is to review penalties within the context of the playoffs only and shall not supersede possible future penalty review by the NORCAL General Manager and Penalty Review Committee. The playoff disciplinary committee shall have full power to increase the suspension under USA Hockey playing rules. For match penalties, the disciplinary committee will hold a hearing prior to the next game of that team in the playoffs. At such hearing, the penalized player, coach or team will have the opportunity to present evidence regarding the penalty to the committee.

21.1 Appeals of Game Misconduct or Match penalties must be made in writing by the rostered head coach unless the penalty being appealed was assessed against the head coach in which case, the written appeal must be made by the rostered team manager to the TD within 30 minutes of the end of the game in which the penalty was called. No appeals are allowed for game misconduct penalties imposed on players or coaches for fighting, for excessive penalties, or for receiving two major penalties or two misconduct penalties in the same game.

21.2 The Tournament Discipline Committee will be named by the TD at the beginning of the playoffs. Not all members of the committee are required to attend all meetings but a minimum of three members must be present. NORCAL or CAHA Referee-in-Chief or Director of Officials are not allowed to be members of the Tournament Discipline Committee.

22. Protests. All protests regarding credentials must be made in writing to the TD by the club president prior to 11:00 p.m. on the Wednesday immediately preceding the playoffs. Any other game protest must be made in writing, to the TD, by the rostered head coach, not later than thirty minutes immediately following the game in question. Protests filed on the basis of disagreement with the referee's judgment decisions will not be accepted. Protests accepted for consideration will be heard by the Tournament Discipline Committee.

23. Participation of non-CAHA Eligible Teams. From time to time the NORCAL board may approve membership and participation by a club or team that is not a member of CAHA and, as such, not eligible to advance to the CAHA state playoffs. In the event that any such team participating in the NORCAL playoffs qualifies for the championship game, the third highest ranking team at the end of the preliminary round will be considered the second place team for purposes of placement in state playoffs. Nothing in this section will preclude such non-CAHA teams from participating in a championship game to determine an NORCAL champion.

24. Tie Breakers. If, at the end of the round robin, two or more teams have an equal number of points, the tie-breaker procedure shall be determined as specified in the 2018 USA Hockey Tournament Guidebook P.33 under **Youth, Girls'/Women's And High School Varsity and/or Prep School – Tie Breaking Rules to Determine Standings Position:**

If at any point during the application of the tie-breaking rules, a team can be seeded higher or lower than other teams that remain tied, the seeded team will be placed in their position in the standings, and the tie-breaker process will begin again at Step 1.

The tie-breaker rules are as follows:

1. The results of only the head-to-head games played between the tied teams in the following order:

- a. Most points earned.*
- b. Most total wins (whether in regulation, overtime and shootout).*
- c. Most regulation wins.*
- d. Differential — Subtracting goals scored against from goals scored in these games, the positions being determined in order of the greatest surplus.*
- e. Quotient — Dividing the goals scored in these games by the goals scored against, the positions being determined in order of the greatest quotient. A quotient involving dividing by zero(0) has higher standing than a quotient from dividing by any number other than zero.*
Where two or more teams have no goals against and the quotient tie breaker is required, the teams shall be ranked high to low in descending order of "goals for."
- f. Most periods won — In the games played by each tied team, points will be awarded for each regulation period won (2 points) and for each regulation period tied (1 point). Positions shall be in the order of highest point total.*

2. If after applying the formulas of 1 a, b, c, d, e or f the tie still exists, the results of all the games played by the teams tied in the following order.

- a. Most total wins (whether in regulation, overtime and shootout).*
- b. Differential — Subtracting goals scored against from goals scored in these games, the positions being determined in order of the greatest surplus.*
- c. Quotient — Dividing the goals scored in these games by the goals scored against, the positions being determined in order of the greatest quotient. A quotient involving dividing by zero (0) has higher standing than a quotient from dividing by any number other than zero.*
Where two or more teams have no goals against and the quotient tiebreaker is required, the teams shall be ranked high to low in descending order of "goals for."
- d. Most periods won — In the games played by each tied team, points will be awarded for each regulation period won (2 points) and for each regulation period tied (1 point). Positions shall be in the order of highest point total.*
- e. Quickest first goal — The team that scored the quickest goal in their preliminary round games shall be ranked highest.*

3. *If the above procedure does not break the tie, the teams shall use a shootout procedure.*

25. Credentials. Each qualifying team must arrange to present credentials for their team to the NORCAL Roster Manager prior to the beginning of the playoffs according to NORCAL Rules.

26. CAHA Playoffs. The first and second place teams in each age classification, as determined by these playoffs, will be invited to participate in the CAHA Playoffs. Teams and players must meet CAHA rules for eligibility.

27. Damage to Premises. Any damage to the premises caused by a player, coach or spectator will result in the person or team responsible to be subject to the Tournament Discipline Committee. In addition, a check from the offending player, coach, or spectator must be received by the rink as a deposit to pay for damages before that team will be allowed to play its next game. Failure to satisfy this requirement may result in forfeits or removal from the playoffs at the discretion of the TD.

28. Player Eligibility for Playoffs . A player must be duly registered and have participated in at least seven (7) games of that team (not less than six of which must have been played within the NORCAL regular season schedule as evidenced by the proper submission of completed score sheets) and be in good financial standing to be eligible to participate in NORCAL playoffs.

Any player who is ineligible for participation in CAHA playoffs shall also be ineligible for participation in NORCAL playoffs.

29. Obligation to Participate in Playoffs All teams eligible for participation in NORCAL and CAHA playoffs are required to participate in all playoff games. Failure of a team to participate in playoffs may result in disciplinary action against the offending club and/or its members including barring the offending club's teams from participation in current or future playoffs.

2.1 Except when excused in advance in writing by the NORCAL General Manager, a team failing to show up for or to complete a playoff game will be ineligible to continue in the NORCAL playoffs or to advance to CAHA playoffs. The club to which the offending team belongs shall pay a fine of not less than \$500 and not more than \$5,000 as determined by the NORCAL Board of Directors. All playoff games of such team, including playoff games already played or scheduled for the rest of the tournament, will be recorded as 1-0 forfeits to the opponents of the forfeiting team. Should a team qualified for advancement to CAHA playoffs fail to show up for or to complete a playoff game--including the championship game, that team will be ineligible to advance to CAHA playoffs, all their playoff games will be determined as forfeit by 1-0 scores and the teams will be reseeded and a replacement team determined by the new standings.