

The Official U.S.EWHA PowerHockey™ Local League Rule Book

Rules as of May 1, 2003.

These rules are subject to revisions/change when deemed necessary.

Visit www.powerhockey.com for future revisions.

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Section I [Game Rules]

- A. A minimum of six players is recommended on each team's roster. A total of five players (including goaltender) are required on the floor to play a game. If a team does not have the required number of players [five], they will be permitted to substitute only one player to field a team. A team must have three of their players present, or they must forfeit. A team will be allowed to play shorthanded the entire game (five against four) rather than forfeit.

The player that is substituted must be of equal ranking or less, and cannot have a higher ranking than the player being substituted for. (Example: You cannot substitute a level 1 player in place of a missing level 2 player.) Points accumulated (goals and/or assists) by the substituted player will not be recorded on their individual statistics, but will count in the score of the game in which they are playing. No new players can be added to a team during the play-offs.

- B. Player transactions must be approved by team captains.
- C. 1.) A team may only play two level 1 ranked players on the floor at the same time. A level 1 or 2 ranked player can be considered a level 3, only if he/she tapes the stick (or uses a bracket or stick mount) to their chair (See player classifications in Section IX of the Rulebook).
- 2.) A level 3 ranked player must be on the floor at all times, playing a forward or defensive position.

3.) Goaltenders cannot be a level 1. A goaltender can be played by a level 2 or level 3.

- D. A team may make line changes (change players) at any time during the game. The player(s) coming into the game cannot come on the court until the player he/she is replacing is next to the team bench.
- E. The game will begin with a face-off at the center face-off circle. The referee will place the ball at the center of the circle and blow the whistle to start play. After each period, teams (goaltenders) will change ends. In overtime, teams will remain on the end in which they began the third period. Each period will begin the same as the start of the game. After a goal has been scored, play will resume with a face-off at the center face-off circle.
- F. A face-off will be called by the referee if the ball becomes unplayable by rolling under a player's wheelchair, into a team's bench area, scorekeepers/timekeepers area, or into an unplayable area such as a hallway or bleachers. Players (except goaltenders) must attempt to move off the ball or play the ball, or risk getting a delay of game penalty (See minor penalties in Section VI of the Rulebook). The face-off will take place in the face-off circle closest to where the play was stopped. This includes resuming play after a penalty or a time-out has been called. If the ball was shot from beyond the center line [half court] and becomes unplayable, the face-off will take place in the zone from where the ball was shot.
- G. A goal is scored when the ball completely crosses the goal line. A goal will not be allowed if the ball was kicked by an offensive player and entered the goal either directly or after deflecting off any player including the goaltender. After a goal is scored, the clock will be stopped for one minute to allow for substitutions, and the referee to report the goal and assist(s) to the scorekeeper. If a team is slow in returning to the face-off circle, the referee will issue a warning. If it happens again, a delay of game penalty will be called.
- H. A face-off will be called by the referee if there is a save/frozen ball by the goaltender. The whistle will be blown immediately [equivalent to a count of one-thousand-one]: (1) when the ref identifies/sees that the ball is under some portion of the goaltender's wheelchair (including, feet rests/pedals, battery box, wheels) or trapped securely between his/her stick and the outside of the goal; (2) when the ball is shot or rolls under the goaltender's wheelchair and clearly does not go into the net, or roll away from the goaltender; and (3) no player may reach under a goaltender's chair to try and score a goal. Any goal scored in this manner will be disallowed and a face-off will take place in the face-off circle closest to where the play was stopped.
- I. Players are not allowed to use their feet or hands to carry or hold the ball while it's in play, but they may use their feet to stop the ball. For example, if the ball

rolls into the front of a player, he/she may stop the ball with their feet and direct it to their stick. But they are not allowed to kick the ball ahead of them, out of the goal crease, out of the zone, to a teammate, or away from an opposing player. All players (including goaltenders) will not be allowed to reach, kick, stretch or raise their legs in an effort to play or defend the ball.

- J. An offensive player is OFF-SIDE if their entire chair crosses the center line prior to the ball. If the ball leaves the offensive zone, that team's players must clear the zone before the ball can be carried or shot back into the offensive zone. If the off-side is whistled the face-off will take place in the offending team's zone at the face-off spot nearest the center line. If an offensive player crosses the line before the ball that is shot, passed or deflected into the offensive zone, but a defending player is able to play the ball, the referee shall signal a DELAYED OFF-SIDE. The off-side violation will be nullified if all offensive players in the offensive zone clear the offensive zone by making chair contact with the center line. The offensive zone must be completely clear of offensive players before a delayed off-side can be nullified with the ball still in the offensive zone. During the delayed off-side, the referee shall stop play for the off-side violation if ANY offensive player touches the ball or attempts to gain possession of a loose ball while the ball is still in the offensive zone or forces the defending ball carrier further back in the offensive zone. *No goal can be scored on a delayed off-side.

Section II [Playing Area]

- A. The playing area for electric wheelchair hockey games will be the surface of a gymnasium, approximately the size of a basketball court. If there is any question as to the playing area, it must be brought to the attention of the officials before the start of the game.
- B. The nets used for goals will be provided by your local league officials. Generally the nets should measure approximately 6 feet [183cm] wide by 3 feet [91cm] high by 1 ½ feet [46cm] deep. In situations where nets are not available, cones can be substituted. The goal crease should measure approximately 8 feet wide [along goal line] and extend 5 feet outward from goal line.
- C. On the playing surface there will be five face-off areas. One in the center of the court and one on each side of both nets positioned approximately halfway between the nets and center line.
- D. If possible, the scorekeeper, timer, penalty area and team benches shall be on one side of the court.
- E. All coaches and players must stay in their team areas throughout the game.

Section III [Equipment]

- A. All sticks must be made of a plastic handle, shaft, and blade. A dowel may be inserted through the blade of the stick for players with a limited ability to stickhandle. The dowel should be made of plastic or similar material (the dowel cannot be made of metal) and cannot exceed more than 3 inches in length on either side of the blade and it cannot be more than ½ inch in diameter. Wood dowels will be allowed (as long as they meet the required measurements listed above), but that is the only part of the stick allowed to be made of wood, and it must be covered with tape for safety reasons. Curving of the stick is allowed, but the blade of the stick cannot wrap around/enclose more than 1/2 of the ball. A team may challenge the legality of an opposition player's equipment (See minor penalties in Section VI of the Rulebook).
- B. A player may tape the stick to their wheelchair (the blade must be placed in the front of the wheelchair's front wheel/foot pedal), or to their hand/arm/leg if they are unable to hold/grip the stick. Players are permitted to use brackets or stick mounts, as long as it places the blade in the front of the wheelchair's front wheel/foot pedal. No stick blade may be placed between the front and rear tires, obstructing passage of the ball through that area. *All objects/attachments considered dangerous must be covered (taped/padded).
- C. If a goaltender chooses to use a standard goaltender stick (larger/thicker blade), the stick must be taped/mounted/bracketed to the wheelchair as defined in Section III (B). Only goaltenders are allowed to use these types of large-bladed sticks. If a goaltender is moved to another position he/she must switch to a non-goaltender stick.
- D. All players must require the use of an electric (power) wheelchair in their daily life. Players who use only manual wheelchairs in their daily life will not be allowed to transfer from a manual wheelchair to an electric (power) wheelchair simply for the purpose of playing hockey.
- E.
 - 1.) No modifications shall be made to a wheelchair that will prohibit the ball from traveling underneath or around the chair. No stick blade may be placed between the front and rear tires, obstructing passage of the ball through that area.
 - 2.) Although there is no "official limit" on the speed of wheelchairs, alterations/modifications to increase the manufacturer's speed of a wheelchair, which clearly shows that chair to be excessively faster than all other chairs is not allowed. Industry standard wheelchairs with industry standard speeds are acceptable.
 - 3.) For safety reasons, electric scooters/carts will not be allowed.

- F. A hollow plastic ball (2" in diameter/baseball-sized) with holes in it will be used as the official game ball.
- G. Participants are free to wear protective gear such as eyewear, helmet, knee or arm pads etc.
- H. Team members must wear the same jersey. The jersey should have a number that can be seen by the referee if necessary. If jerseys are not available a team should wear the same color shirts.

Section IV [Timekeepers, Scorekeepers, and Referees]

- A. It is the League Committee's responsibility to ensure that a timekeeper, scorekeeper, and referees are available and ready for each game.
- B. Each game will consist of three fifteen-minute periods. The game will be played on a non-stop [running-time] basis, except when a goal is scored. The clock will be stopped for one minute to allow for substitutions, and the referee to report the goal and assist(s) to the scorekeeper. The final five minutes of the third period will be played on a stop-time basis, meaning the clock will be stopped after each whistle [stoppage of play], if the score of the game is within three goals. Between each period there will be a three-minute break. After the break teams will switch playing ends. Each team will be allowed one time-out per game consisting of two minutes in length. A team may only call time-out during a stoppage in play. (For instance, when the ball becomes unplayable [out-of-play], after a goal is scored, or after a penalty has been called.) If the game goes to overtime, and a team has not used its time-out, the time-out will be carried over to the overtime period.
- C. If possible, the official game clock should be large enough and placed high enough so that the referees can see the clock from anywhere on the playing area.
- D. The timekeeper is responsible for keeping track of the time for each period, any time-outs, and the time for any penalties. The timekeeper must also instruct the penalized player when he/she may return to the game.
- E. The scorekeeper will record the time of each goal, the name and number of the player who scored the goal, and the name and number of the one (or two) player(s) who assisted on the goal. The scorekeeper is also responsible for recording any information regarding penalties.
- F. It is the referees' responsibility to inform the timekeeper and scorekeeper of all penalties called. This includes the name and number of the penalized player, the time of the penalty, the type of penalty, and the duration of the penalty.

Section V [Penalty Stipulations]

- A. If a goaltender receives a penalty, a teammate on the floor at the time of the penalty must serve it. The player serving the penalty will be chosen by the penalized team.
- B. A player serving a penalty must return to the playing area after completion of a penalty before he/she can be substituted.
- C. After three game misconduct's in one season a player may be subject to further penalty or removal at the discretion of the League Committee.
- D. Any player given a game misconduct must exit the playing area.
- E. If a level 1 ranked player is serving a penalty, his/her team may have only one level 1 ranked player on the court until the penalty has expired. The level 1 ranked player serving the penalty is still considered to be on that line even though they are in the penalty box. If a level 3 ranked player is serving a penalty, the player is still considered to be on that line, and his/her team does not have to put another level 3 on the floor to replace the penalized player.
- F. If coincidental penalties are whistled/called (meaning one player from each team is called for a penalty), teams will play shorthanded [four-on-four].

Section VI [Minor Penalties]

- A. **HOOKING:** When a player places his/her stick around another player, player's stick, or wheelchair in attempts to stop or hold the player. [Two-minute penalty.]
- B. **BOARDING:** Recklessly "riding" a player into the boards with excess. [Two-minute penalty.]
- C. **HOLDING:** When a player, with his/her hands or wheelchair, impedes another player's progress by holding the player, player's stick, or the player's wheelchair. [Two-minute penalty.]
- D. **INTERFERENCE:** Making contact with another player who does not have possession of the ball. [Two-minute penalty.]
- E. **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:** Swearing, arguing or abusing other players, officials, or equipment. [Two-minute penalty.]
- F. **IN THE CREASE:** No player except the goalie is allowed to go into the goal crease at any time unless the ball goes in first. Players may go into the goal crease if the ball is in there first, but must immediately attempt to exit the goal crease by

driving through or backing out of the crease. An attacking (offensive) player stopping/parking any part of their wheelchair in the goal crease at any time will result in a stoppage of play and an automatic face-off in the attacking (offensive) player's zone. If an attacking (offensive) player is trapped [boxed in, unable to back out or drive out] while attempting to exit the goal crease, a whistle is blown and a face-off will occur in the attacking (offensive) player's zone. Players are permitted to have their sticks in the goal crease only if the ball enters the goal crease first. If an attacking (offensive) player's stick is in the crease before the ball, a whistle is blown and a face-off will occur in the attacking (offensive) player's zone and any goal scored on that play would be disallowed. If any goal is scored when in violation of this rule, it will be disallowed. If a defensive player commits any of the above violations it will result in a penalty. [Two-minute penalty.]

- G. **BENCH MINORS:** Can be called against players or coaches for abuse against officials or other players or for too many level 1 players, or players in general, on the floor. [Two-minute penalty.] See Section I (B/1).
- H. **RAMMING:** A player may not deliberately run into another player with his/her wheelchair. A player may only "ride-off another player". Side-to-side contact only. Backing into another player as they pass by, using the front of a player's chair to make contact, or trying to push a player's chair out of the way is not permitted. [Two-minute penalty.]
- I. **DANGEROUS DRIVING:** Referee may call this penalty if he/she deems that a player is driving dangerously or recklessly. This includes driving in reverse at a high rate of speed for more than two chair-lengths, or in a crowd (referees' discretion). A player is permitted to drive in reverse for more than two chair-lengths only if the player is attempting to get back on defense and is the lone defensive player in his/her zone. [Two-minute penalty.]
- J. **CHARGING:** Deliberately hitting another player with a run of more than two wheelchair lengths. [Two-minute penalty.]
- K. **HIGH STICKING:** No player shall purposely raise their stick above their shoulders to make contact with the ball or another player. A player may only raise their stick shoulder height while in the act of shooting/hitting the ball (including wind-up and follow-through). If the player's raised stick makes contact with an opposing player a penalty will be called. [Two-minute penalty.]
- L. **DELAY OF GAME:** A penalty will be called if the ball is under a player's chair and he/she makes no attempt to move off the ball or play the ball (this does not include goaltenders). Goaltenders will be given a penalty if they repeatedly knock the goal net off the goal crease/goal line. A penalty will also be called for taking too much time to return to the face-off circle after a goal, or other stoppage of play. [Two-minute penalty.]

- M. **ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT:** During a stoppage of play a team may ask the referee to examine a player's equipment to see if it is in violation of rules. If the player's equipment is illegal, the player will receive a penalty. If the equipment is found to be legal, the challenging team will receive a delay of game penalty. [Two-minute penalty.]
- N. **THROWING/DROPPING STICK:** A penalty will be called if a player deliberately throws, drops, or shoots a stick (or any other object) at the ball to prevent a goal, or a player from advancing with the ball. [Two-minute penalty.] If the player with the ball is advancing towards the goaltender with no defender between him/her and the goaltender, and a stick is thrown or shot at the ball, thus preventing a goal, a penalty shot will be awarded to the advancing player. If the player with the ball is advancing towards an empty net, and a stick is thrown, dropped, or shot at the ball, thus preventing a goal, the referee will award the advancing player a goal.
- O. **SLASHING:** Non-shooting motion contact with the hockey stick on another player's body. [Two-minute penalty.]

Section VII [Major Penalties]

- A. **DRAWING BLOOD:** If a player bleeds after a minor penalty, a major penalty is then assessed. [Five-minute player penalty.] At referees' discretion, penalized player may receive a game misconduct and be ejected from the game.
- B. **SLASHING:** Deliberate contact with the hockey stick on another player's body. [Five-minute player penalty.] At referees' discretion, penalized player may receive a game misconduct and be ejected from the game.
- C. **SPEARING:** Using the blade of the hockey stick to spear another player. [Five-minute player penalty.] At referees' discretion, penalized player may receive a game misconduct and be ejected from the game.
- D. **BUTT ENDING:** Using the end of the hockey shaft to hit another player. [Five-minute player penalty.] At referees' discretion, penalized player may receive a game misconduct and be ejected from the game.
- E. **ATTEMPT TO INJURE:** At the officials' discretion, any conscious attempt to hurt another player. [Five-minute player penalty.] At referees' discretion, penalized player may receive a game misconduct and be ejected from the game.
- F. **FIGHTING:** Using body or wheelchair to fight with or injure another player. [Five-minute player penalty.] At referees' discretion, penalized player may receive a game misconduct and be ejected from the game.

Section VIII [Play-off Schedule]

- A. Each playoff game will be played like a normal regular season game. If the score is tied at the end of regulation time, there will be a five minute overtime period. The overtime period will be played on a non stop-time basis, with the first team to score winning. If the overtime period ends in a tie there will be a shoot-out. Each team is allowed three players who will each shoot once. If at the end of the first rotation there is still a tie there will be a second shoot-out with the first team to score a goal winning. The goalie that was in the net for the majority of the game must continue in net for the shoot-out. The goalie may not be one of the players chosen to be one of the shooters in the shoot-out.
- B. No new players can be added to a team during the playoffs.
- C. A player must have played in at least 50% of the regular season in order to qualify for post-season play.
- D. The team finishing with the best record will play the team with the worst [second best record playing second worst etc.]. If there are an odd number of teams in the league, the bottom two teams will play each other to see who advances to play the top team.

Section IX [Player Classifications]

- A. **Level 1 Players:** A player who has the upper body strength to lift the stick and hit the ball a good distance and with speed. These players have the ability to shoot and pass the ball quickly and with velocity. These players can usually switch the ball easily from forehand to backhand (or vice-versa) allowing good ability to carry, control, and maneuver with the ball through/around other players. These are players who can reach in front, across, or possibly even behind his/her wheelchair with their stick relatively easily to bring the ball into their control or take it away from another player.
- B. **Level 2 Players:** This level ranges from (a) players who may be able to lift the stick and hit the ball with fair distance and speed, but lack the power and reaching ability as seen in a level 1, to (b) players who may rely on the strength/momentum of the wheelchair to shoot and pass the ball, and may be unable to easily lift and swing the stick. These players generally keep the stick on one side of their chair or hold the stick between their legs. They may or may not have the stick taped/attached to their hand/arm/leg.

Level 2 players lack the ability to easily or effectively reach with their stick to more than one side of their chair/body. These players are able to carry and control the ball, but their limited ability to reach restricts their capability to maneuver

with the ball through and around other players. A level 2 player will commonly not have the strength to easily or effectively use their backhand to shoot, control the ball, or pass the ball with force.

*Important note: Many level 2 players will have the ability to shoot/pass the ball with their own strength and may be able to take the ball from another player. Unlike a level 1 player, these players are unable to easily reach out in front, behind, or across his/her wheelchair with their stick.

- C. **Level 3 Players:** A player who tapes/mounts/brackets the stick to the wheelchair, or may hold the stick between their legs. These players rely almost entirely on the strength/momentum of the wheelchair to shoot, pass, and control the ball. They are very limited in physical ability/strength to maneuver with ball through/around other players, and are unable to reach with their stick.

This classification system is based solely on physical strength. It does not take into account a player's knowledge in playing the game of PowerHockey. It may be common for a level 2 or level 3 player to be more beneficial to a team due to their knowledge of the game.

- A. In accordance with U.S. EWHA rules, the League Committee will be in charge of player classifications. The League Committee will set ratings and, when necessary, vote on changing a player's level.

Section X [Rule Notes]

- A. **DROPPED STICKS:** If a player drops his/her stick they are encouraged to keep playing until a stoppage in play occurs, or the stick is handed to them. (Dropped sticks are a common part of the game.) A referee's first priority is to follow the flow of the game and the ball. If there is an opportunity to pick up the player's dropped stick then he/she will do so. A coach or team helper may come onto the floor to pick up the stick for the player, but should wait for the ball to move away from the area of the dropped stick. If he/she interferes with game-play by getting hit by the ball or obstructing an opposing player's path to the ball, that coach/helper's team, at the referees' discretion, will be charged with a penalty for interference. [Two-minute penalty].
- B. **POWERCHAIR TIPPING:** Although rare, a player's power chair tipping over results in an immediate stoppage in play. It is the referees' decision if the tip of the chair was caused by a penalty, such as Dangerous Driving, Boarding, Ramming, or Charging. If the tip was caused the player that tipped he/she will be charged with no less than a Delay of Game Penalty [Two-minutes].
- C. **SEATBELTS:** All players should wear some type of seatbelt during play for safety reasons. A referee does not have to check for this and a penalty cannot be

given just because the opposing team or referees' notice it. However, if a player falls out of his/her chair because of leaning forward too far, stopping too fast, or running into something/someone (but not tipping chair) this will result in a Delay of Game Penalty [Two-minutes] on that player.