



WHL ANNOUNCES 2015-16 RULE CHANGES

Mon Sep 14

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Regina, SK – The Western Hockey League announced today, at a media conference in Regina, a series of rule changes that have been implemented for the League's 50th Season this year at a media conference in Regina. The rule changes include the adoption of the three-on-three overtime format.

Most of the rule changes have also been adopted by the National Hockey League and have been tested throughout the pre-season schedule.

Overtime Format

Similar to the NHL, the WHL will adopt a three-on-three overtime format during the regular season. If two teams are tied following regulation time, a two minute break will be followed by five minutes of overtime where each team will be permitted to use only three skaters and a goaltender each when at even strength. As in previous years, if two teams remain tied after the five minute overtime period, a shootout will be used to determine the winner.

- When regulation time ends and the teams are five-on-three, teams will start overtime five-on-three. Once player strength reaches five-on-four or five-on-five, at the next stoppage of play, player strength is adjusted to four-on-three or three-on-three, as appropriate.
- When regulation time ends and the teams are five-on-four, teams will start overtime four-on-three. Once player strength reaches four-on-four, at the next stoppage of play, player strength is adjusted to three-on-three.

- When regulation time ends and the teams are four-on-three, teams will start overtime four-on-three. Once player strength reaches four-on-four, at the next stoppage of play, player strength is adjusted to three-on-three.
 - When regulation time ends and teams are four-on-four, teams will start overtime three-on-three.
 - If a team is penalized in overtime, teams will play four-on-three. If both teams are penalized with coincident minor penalties at the same stoppage of play (with no other penalties in effect), teams will continue to play three-on-three.
 - If a team is penalized in overtime so that a two-man advantage is called for, then the offending team will remain at three skaters while the non-offending team will be permitted five skaters. Once player strength reaches five-on-four or five-on-five, at the next stoppage of play, player strength is adjusted to four-on-three or three-on-three, as appropriate.
 - At no time will a team have less than three players on the ice.

Ice Markings

The WHL will now use hash marks that are five feet, seven inches apart on the outside of the two face-off circles in each team's end. Additionally, the WHL will enlarge the goaltender trapezoid this year which will increase the area in which goaltenders are permitted to play the puck below their own goal line.

Face-Offs

This season, face-offs will be conducted with the defending player placing his blade in the designated marking the ice first followed immediately by the attacking player at all eight of the nine face-off dots (excludes center ice). When a face-off occurs at center ice, the visiting player shall place his blade on the ice first.