

SOUTHERN COUNTIES MINOR HOCKEY LEAGUE

February 28, 2026

2025-2026 PLAYOFF RULES

1. A DIVISION – Declaration Date March 27

- a) Round-robin to be completed by March 1.
- b) In age groups with 5 teams, 4th and 5th place from the round-robin will play a one game play-in on March 2 or 3. See Item 4 below for details. (Winner moves forward as 4th place team.)
- c) Best of 3-game semi-final with 1st playing 4th and 2nd playing 3rd place from the round-robin to be completed by March 10.
- d) 2nd vs 3rd series can start immediately after round-robin finishes. No need to wait for play-in game of 4th vs 5th.
- e) Winners from semi-finals move on to the best of 5-game final series to be completed by March 26. (Teams are expected to be ready to play through March Break if necessary, but schedulers are encouraged to try to avoid it.)

2. B DIVISION – TIER 2 (U11, U13 & U15) – Declaration Date March 20

- a) Round-robin to be completed by March 1.
- b) In groups with 5 teams (U13B) 4th and 5th place from the round-robin will play a one game play-in on March 2 or 3. See Item 4 below for details. (Winner moves forward as 4th place.)
- c) Best of 3-game semi-final with 1st playing 4th and 2nd playing 3rd place from the round-robin to be completed by March 8.
- d) In groups of 5 teams, the 2nd vs 3rd series can start immediately after round-robin finishes. No need to wait for play-in game of 4th vs 5th.
- e) Winners from semi-finals move on to the best of 3-game final series to be completed by March 20. Teams are expected to be ready to play thru March Break, but schedulers are encouraged to try to get done by Friday, March 13 with no games after the 1st bookend weekend – Sunday, March 15.

3. B DIVISION - TIER 3 (U11, U13 & U15) – Declaration Date March 27

- a) Round-robin to be complete by March 7.
- b) No play-in games. In age groups with more than 4 teams the top 4 teams advance to the semi-finals. Teams placing lower than 4th in round-robin are eliminated.
- c) Best of 3 games semi-finals of 1 vs 4 and 2 vs 3 end March 14. (Teams are expected to be ready to play through March Break, but ice schedulers should try to accommodate completion by March 14 as there is enough time to do so.)
- d) Winners from semi-finals move on to the best of 3-game final series to be completed by March 26. (Can play during March Break if both teams agree.)

4. PLAY-IN GAMES (A Division and Tier 2 of B Division Only)

- a) In age groups having 5 teams, the 4th and 5th place teams at the end of round-robin play will play a single play-in game on March 2nd or 3rd. The 4th place team has first opportunity to host. If the 4th place team does not have resources to host the game in the time window provided, the 5th place team may host. No matter where the game is played, the 4th place team is the home team.
- b) Winner of play-in game moves forward as 4th place team.
- c) The team with the most goals at the end of regulation time will be declared the winner.

5. OVERTIME RULES

- a) All play-in and series games must have a winner.
- b) The team with the most goals at the end of regulation time will be declared the winner.
- c) If the game is tied at the end of regulation, a 5-minute sudden victory over time period of 4-on-4 plus goaltender will follow.
 - a. Teams do not change ends for the overtime period.
 - b. Unexpired penalties from regulation play will carry forward to over time.
 - c. If one player from one team is serving a single time penalty, play shall be 4-on-3.
 - d. If more than one player from one team is serving a time penalty, play shall start 5-on-3 or 4-on-3 until the next stoppage of play that would result in 4-on-3 or 4-on-4 under the 4-on-4 concept with no other players serving a time penalty. At that stoppage of play things resume with 4-on-4 or 4-on-3 as the case may be.
 - e. Players may change on-the-fly or during a stoppage of play.
- d) If the game is still tied after the 5-minute overtime period a shootout shall proceed as follows:
 - a. A five-round shootout of 5 players will be carried out.
 - b. Players serving an unexpired penalty at the end of overtime are ineligible to participate in the shootout at any time.
 - c. Teams will alternate shooting.
 - d. The home team will decide who shoots first.
 - e. If still tied after 5 shooters, the game will continue in a single shooter round by round sudden victory.
 - f. Teams must use all eligible shooters before a shooter can be recycled.
 - g. After all eligible players have shot, recycled players will shoot in the same order as the previous round.
 - h. The timekeeper to record the jersey number of the shooter. Players to face their back to the timekeeper prior to shooting. The timekeeper will signal the referee once they have satisfactorily recorded the jersey number. The timekeeper will inform the referee when all players have shot. When players are recycled the timekeeper will inform the referee if and when a player is shooting out of order.
 - i. Conduct of the shootout will follow the pertinent sections of Hockey Canada Rule 4.11(b). The penalty for distracting or interfering with the goaltender during the shootout shall be a disallowed goal if a goal is scored on that shooting attempt. The penalty for distracting or interfering with the shooter shall be an awarded goal if a goal is not scored on that shooting attempt.
 - j. Teams may use either goaltender in the shootout. The goaltenders can be changed at any time. (No warm-ups.)

6. GENERAL

- a) League Scheduler will set match-ups in TheOneDB. Centre Schedulers to negotiate details of the games
- b) All play-in and series games to have a contract between the Centres describing game details such as date and time of game, period lengths, overtime, flood or no flood, referee systems, and other pertinent details as necessary.
- c) Team with highest standing from round-robin will have the extra home game in the original schedule (i.e. 3rd game in 3 game series and 5 game in 5 game series).
- d) Home assigned referees for all play-in, semi-final series, and final series games.
- e) All games to have a 3-minute warm-up.
- f) For play-in and semi-final games period lengths, breaks between periods and flood or no flood will be the same as the home team has played all season.

- g) For final series games period lengths, breaks between periods and flood or no flood will be the same as the OMHA playdowns as follows:
 - a. U10 to U13: 10-15-15
 - b. U14 to U18: 15-15-flood-15