

2026 Snowball Shootout Rules

December 4-6, 2026 | Euclid C.E. Orr Arena

Game Time

- Two half-ice rinks with hard boards separating each rink.
- 42-minute games: three 14-minute periods.
- Line changes on the referee.
- A face-off will occur at the beginning of each period.
- The ice will be cut every 1-2 hours.

Game Supervision

- Each team must have one coach on the bench at all times.
- Game officials and scorekeepers/clock operators will be provided for all games.
- Referees will be certified officials from the Cleveland Suburban Hockey League.

Goaltenders

- Intermediate nets will be used in all divisions.
- A goaltender in full goalie gear is required to guard the net and will have full goalie privileges.
- When the goalie freezes the puck, or after a goal, the team that shot/scored will retreat to mid-ice. The advancing team will receive the puck and play will resume; the clock will run.
- Teams may rotate goaltenders or use the same player in net throughout the tournament in all divisions.
- A team may pull its goaltender only during the final three minutes of the final period. Pulling the goaltender before that time is not permitted.
- If the other team scores into the empty net, the team may put its goaltender back in the net.

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Line Changes

- Line changes are initiated by a buzzer every two minutes.
- Players on the ice must immediately stop playing the puck when the buzzer sounds and abandon the puck to return to their bench.
- Goalies must remain aware, even after a buzzer.
- A puck shot before the buzzer that is coming at the goaltender is a live puck, and the goalie should attempt to stop it.
- If a pre-buzzer shot beats the goalie and enters the net, the goal counts. The goal also counts if the goalie stops playing upon hearing the buzzer and the puck enters the net.

Benches and Line Changes

- A new line of players may NOT step onto the ice until the buzzer sounds.
- Play will resume after the referee initiates play.

Penalties

- If a player commits a penalty, the player will be sent off the ice for the remainder of their shift. The offending team will play 3v4 for the remainder of the shift.

Warm-ups and Timeouts

- There will be a one-minute skating warm-up before games, with no pucks.
- There are no timeouts except for injury timeouts.

Injury Timeouts

- If there is an injury on the ice, the official on that rink will alert the timekeeper.
- The timekeeper will sound the buzzer twice to indicate an injury.
- Players on all mini-rinks will take a knee until the situation is resolved.

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Scoring

- Scores will be kept. The maximum goal differential is seven goals; no score will be entered in the standings beyond a seven-goal differential.
- Any forfeited game will be recorded as a 3-0 score.
- No individual statistics will be kept.
- Standings points: **Win - 2 points | Tie - 1 point | Loss - 0 points.**
- There is no overtime or shootout in round-robin play.

Jersey Colors

- Jersey colors will be assigned based on the home or away team.
- **Home team:** white/light jersey.
- **Away team:** dark jersey.

Brackets and Playoffs

- Each team plays the other teams in its bracket once, for three round-robin games.
- Seeds 1 and 2 at the end of pool play advance to the championship game.
- Seeds 3 and 4 at the end of pool play play in the consolation game.

Championship Game | Seed 1 vs. Seed 2

- A championship banner and runner-up trophy will be awarded on the ice.
- Championship and runner-up medals will be awarded on the ice to each player.

Consolation Game | Seed 3 vs. Seed 4

- No awards will be presented.

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Tournament Tie-Breakers

1. Most wins.
2. Head-to-head record, if applicable.
3. Goal differential. Maximum differential per game is seven; forfeits are recorded as 3-0.
4. Fewest goals against.
5. Most goals for.
6. A coin flip.

When more than two teams are tied, the entire tie-breaker sequence is used to determine the first team to be eliminated. The sequence then starts again with the remaining teams to eliminate the next team losing via tie-breakers.

If more than three teams are tied, repeat the entire sequence to eliminate teams until two remain. Of those two teams, one is eliminated using the tie-breakers. In every instance, restart with criterion 1.

Tied Championship or Consolation Game

- If a playoff game is tied at the end of regulation, there will be a shootout.
- The shootout consists of three players from each team.
- The visiting team shoots first.
- If the score remains tied after the first three shooters from each team, additional players will shoot until a winner is determined.
- Additional rounds are not sudden death.
- No player may repeat until all players have shot once.
- Shootout order must be presented before the start of the championship game.