

THE WASHINGTON WITCHING HOUR CLASSIC

Comprehensive Tournament Rules, Policies, & Protocols

October 30 – November 1, 2026 | ION: The Rinks at Compass Creek (Leesburg, VA)

Division: 12U Peewee AAA (2014 & 2015 Birth Years)

Hosted by the 2014 Washington Little Capitals

1. REGISTRATION, ELIGIBILITY, & ADMINISTRATION

- **USA Hockey Sanctioning:** All games are played under USA Hockey rules unless otherwise modified by this document. All participating teams must be in good standing and registered with USA Hockey or Hockey Canada.
- **Roster Freeze & Check-in:** Only players listed on the official, certified USA Hockey (1-T) or Hockey Canada roster are eligible. Rosters must be submitted digitally prior to the tournament and presented at team check-in. No double-rostering is permitted.
- **SafeSport Compliance:** All coaches, managers, and locker room monitors must be SafeSport certified and have completed required background checks as mandated by USA Hockey.
- **Entry Fee & Refunds:** The entry fee is \$2,400. This fee is non-refundable once a team has been officially accepted and the schedule is published, except in the case of tournament cancellation.
- **Lodging Policy:** We operate a strict NO STAY-TO-PLAY policy. Teams are free to book any hotel or lodging of their choice without penalty. We are happy to make recommendations for nearby hotels and activities.
- **GameSheet:** The official tournament schedule and all player/team statistics will be managed and tracked using the GameSheet digital scoring system.
- **The game schedule will be released approximately two weeks before the tournament.**
- **Games may begin as early as 8:00 AM on Friday.**
- **The final games are expected to conclude by approximately 4:00 PM on Sunday.**

2. TOURNAMENT FORMAT & STANDINGS

- **Game Guarantee:** Each team is guaranteed a minimum of five (5) games and a maximum of six (6) games.
- **Round-Robin Phase:** Teams will be seeded into two pools. Each team will play four (4) round-robin games on Friday and Saturday.
- **Playoffs & Placement:** The top 4 teams overall advance to Sunday's Semifinals (1v4, 2v3). Winners play in the Championship; losers play a 3rd Place Consolation. Teams seeded 5-8 will play a final Sunday placement game (5v8, 6v7) to fulfill their 5-game guarantee.
- **Points System:** Points are awarded as follows: Win = 2 Points | Tie = 1 Point | Loss = 0 Points.

3. GAME RULES, TIMING, & SCORING

- **Time Allocation:** All games will be played within a strict 60-minute ice slot.
- **Warm-ups:** A 3-minute warm-up begins as soon as the Zamboni doors close. Teams must provide their own warm-up pucks.
- **Period Lengths:** Games consist of three (3) 12-minute stop-time periods.
- **Timeouts:** Each team is permitted one (1) 60-second timeout per game, applicable in regulation or overtime.
- **Mercy Rule (Running Clock):** If a team leads by five (5) or more goals in the 3rd period, the clock switches to running time. If the deficit drops to 4 goals or less, stop-time resumes.
- **Body Checking:** In accordance with USA Hockey rules for the 12U classification, THIS IS A NON-CHECKING TOURNAMENT. Proper legal body contact/angling is permitted, but outright body checking will result in a penalty.
- **Forfeits:** A forfeit will be recorded as a 1-0 victory for the opposing team.

4. TIE-BREAKER PROTOCOLS

If two or more teams are tied in points after round-robin play, the following tie-breakers apply in order.
NOTE: If three or more teams are tied, once one team is advanced/eliminated using a step, the remaining tied teams RESTART the tie-breaker process from Step 1.

- **Step 1:** Head-to-head result (only applies if all tied teams played each other).
- **Step 2:** Most total wins in round-robin play.
- **Step 3:** Goal Differential (Goals For minus Goals Against). Maximum differential credited per game is +/- 5 goals.
- **Step 4:** Fewest total Goals Against in all round-robin games.
- **Step 5:** Fewest total Penalty Minutes in all round-robin games.
- **Step 6:** Coin Toss administered by the Tournament Director.

5. PLAYOFF OVERTIME & SHOOTOUTS

Round-robin and consolation games may end in a tie. Semifinals, 3rd Place, and Championship games require a winner:

- **Overtime:** One 5-minute, sudden-death, 4-on-4 overtime period. Penalties carry over from regulation. If a team is penalized in OT, the unpenalized team gains a skater (4-on-3).
- **Shootout (Round 1):** If still tied, a 3-player shootout will occur. The Home team chooses who shoots first.
- **Sudden-Death Shootout:** If still tied, a sudden-death shootout begins. Every skater on the bench must shoot before a player can take a second shot. Any player serving a penalty at the end of OT is ineligible for the shootout.

6. DISCIPLINE, PROTESTS, & ZERO TOLERANCE

- **Penalty Lengths (12U):** Minor: 1:30 | Major: 4:00 | Misconduct: 8:00.

- **Suspensions:** Any player or coach receiving a Game Misconduct is automatically suspended for the team's NEXT tournament game. Any Match Penalty results in immediate expulsion from the tournament pending a USA Hockey hearing.
- **Zero Tolerance:** The tournament enforces USA Hockey's Zero Tolerance Policy. Any coach, player, or spectator verbally or physically abusing an official will be immediately removed from the facility by security.
- **Protests:** Referee on-ice calls (including penalties and goals) CANNOT be protested. Administrative protests (e.g., roster eligibility) must be submitted to the Tournament Director within 60 minutes of game completion.

7. FACILITY & GAME DAY PROTOCOLS

- **Early Starts:** Teams must be ready to play up to 15 minutes prior to their scheduled start time.
- **Jerseys:** Home team wears LIGHT/WHITE. Away team wears DARK. Home team is responsible for resolving conflicts.
- **Locker Rooms:** Teams must leave locker rooms completely clean. The Head Coach is financially responsible for any damages. A SafeSport certified adult must monitor the room at all times.
- **Halloween Festivities:** Look out for Halloween candy stations, costume contests for spectators, and other halloween themed events