



# **FLOOR HOCKEY LEAGUE RULES**

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# **SECTION 1 – SPORTSMANSHIP AND SPIRIT SCORES**

## **Sportsmanship and the CVSSC:**

The CVSSC endeavours to make all games as safe and fun as possible, emphasizing the 'Spirit of the Game' no matter the sport or level of play. All players are expected to play with an overriding emphasis on sportsmanship, fair play and a fun-first approach. Players, or teams, that do not play by these values may league discipline, including suspension or expulsion from the leagues.

## **Spirit Scores Explained:**

To help ensure that teams adopt a sportsmanlike manner in games, the CVSSC collects post-game sportsmanship ratings known as 'spirit scores' from team captains in most leagues. In these 'spirit scores,' team captains are grading their opponents on a 0-5 scale on how fair and fun they were to play. These scores are kept private until the end of the regular season, but are used for the following purposes: (1) The first tie-breaker in the standings, thereby rewarding the more sportsmanlike team in the event of a tie; (2) Identifying whether a team may need to be addressed in regards to their behaviour, rules knowledge, or for safety concerns during the season; (3) Putting together an objective, peer-sourced review of each team to help support any decisions by the league to reward the most sportsmanlike teams in the CVSSC and/or discipline the least sportsmanlike teams.

## **Reporting Scores and Spirit Scores:**

Captains can report the spirit score and game score to the CVSSC coordinator after the game, where possible. If there is no CVSSC representative, or that rep is unavailable, please send the information to Scott Petersen (Director, CVSSC) at [scott@comoxvalleysports.ca](mailto:scott@comoxvalleysports.ca) within 24 hours of your game. If you do not report these scores within 24 hours, whatever game score is submitted will be used by default and the opponent will receive an automatic 5 for spirit score.

## **Reporting Sportsmanship Concerns:**

Captains are encouraged to communicate with each other before games, and during stoppages in play, if any issues need to be resolved. If not sufficiently resolved by the opposing team, please contact the CVSSC coordinator at an appropriate time for help, when possible. If you deem the issue requires further action, please send a summary of the incident to the league at the email address above.

## SECTION 2 – WEATHER AND CANCELLATION POLICY

### **Indoor Sports Weather Policy:**

The CVSSC is unlikely to cancel indoor games due to weather conditions, unless they result in the facility being closed or otherwise inaccessible. Teams will be contacted via the 'cancellation call' protocol below when that is the case.

### **Outdoor Sports Weather Policy:**

While spring and summer in the Comox Valley can be absolutely stunning, these seasons can also be full of erratic weather, with conditions differing wildly from one part of the valley to another. The CVSSC will cancel and re-schedule games when it's believed the weather or field conditions may compromise safety or playing experience. However, since field space and available game nights are at a premium, players should expect to play through some wind/rain during an outdoor sports season for most sports.

- **Weekday Sports** – The initial decision on whether to play or cancel the games will take place by 4 p.m. on game nights. Unless notified of a cancellation via the 'cancellation call' protocol below, please proceed to your game as scheduled. The field coordinator and team captains can consult with each other on whether to delay the start time and/or cancel the games if the weather or field conditions have worsened.
- **Weekend Sports** – Unless otherwise notified before game time via the 'cancellation call' procedures below, teams should show up to the field for their game times regardless of weather. A call on whether to postpone start time, play or cancel, will be made by the team captains (in conjunction with the coordinator, when applicable). Missed games will be re-scheduled when possible.

### **Cancellation Call:**

When games are cancelled, the CVSSC will notify its players via the following methods:

- **Facebook Posting** – When games are cancelled, a notice will be posted on the CVSSC Facebook Page at [www.facebook.com/ComoxValleySports/](http://www.facebook.com/ComoxValleySports/) for all players to see. Typically, weather cancellations will be posted around 4 p.m.
- **Captains Email** – Once games have been cancelled (weather, gym closure, field closure, etc...), the CVSSC will send out an email to team captains and singles teams. This is typically only possible if the decision is received/made by 4 p.m.
- **Coordinator Phone/Text** – When cancellations are last-minute, or that decision is reached at the field/ beach courts, we will attempt to contact team captains and singles via phone call or text. Beach volleyball is a bit more weather dependant than most sports and more likely to have the info delivered this route.

## SECTION 3 – EQUIPMENT, SET-UP AND CLEAN-UP

### Equipment:

**CVSSC Equipment:** The CVSSC provides scoreboards and a bag containing two sets of extra goalie gear (pads, chest protectors, helmets, gloves, blockers and pants) for team use. Game balls are available upon request, and singles teams will be provided with practice balls.

**Players' Equipment:** Bring a pair of non-marking, clean indoor shoes to change into, plus the appropriate shirt colour for each game. Teams may inform the CVSSC of a team shirt colour, but are requested to have a back-up team colour available at each game just in case. A list of team colours, and their priority over that colour, is available on the first page of the league schedule – with the priority of wearing that colour determined by order of registration each season. Please look at your opponents' colour each week to help avoid confusion at the games. Some players do wear gloves, soccer shin pads or goggles due to preferences, but they are not required.

**Sticks:** Sticks with plastic blades and one-piece composites are allowed, as long as they don't mark up the floor (ie. stick blades should not be taped). Wooden blades are not allowed.

**Goalie Equipment:** There are currently no strict standards for the size of goaltending equipment, but the CVSSC reserves the right to crack down on equipment size if it's not reasonable for the size of the goalie.

### Gym Set-Up:

- The CVSSC will typically be allowed into the gym about 15 minutes prior to the first game's start time to set up. But entry into the gym can change due to a variety of factors. Please be patient and ask the coordinator or facility caretaker before entering the gym, if there is something else going on in the gym.
- Benches, nets and mats all need to be moved before game time and it takes many hands to make this work quickly. Please take note of the proper set-up and be sure to help as often as possible when in the early slot.
- Please don't use any equipment left out by the facility that we don't already have permission to use.

### Clean-Up:

- At the end of the evening, please help put everything back in storage. Many helping hands help make it easier and faster.

- Please make sure to clean up after yourselves and your team. This includes any garbage, water bottles, and clothing. The CVSSC is not responsible for any clothing, water bottles or valuables left behind at any sports or events.
- If you wore shoes that marked the gym floor, it will be your responsibility to remove those markings from the floor before leaving.

\*The CVSSC is not responsible for personal items before, during or after games. Please be sure to clean up after yourselves and teammates before leaving and certainly check with the both the CVSSC and the facility's lost and found for anything left behind, including: water bottles, clothing, equipment, keys, wallets and more.

## SECTION 4 – ROSTERS, SUBS AND DEFAULTS

### Rosters:

- There is no maximum number of players that can be on a roster, but teams are advised to include all players they expect will play on their roster when registering.
- A registered team can bring in additional players that are not on their roster during the season. They must fill out a waiver prior to playing.
- In the spirit of sportsmanship, players are expected to have played with the team during the regular season to be able to play with them in the playoffs.
- In the playoffs, teams that are playing for a chance at first place (typically the top 4 teams) can only field players that have played at least 1 regular season game for them. Teams outside the top 4 may bring in subs via the usual sub rules.
- Individual teams rosters (for players that signed up without a team) and league information will be emailed out within 48 hours of first scheduled game.

### Subs:

- The CVSSC will attempt to post a publicly available 'Subs List' within the first 2-3 weeks of the regular season starting. The subs list can be accessed via a link on each sport's individual page on the website at [www.comoxvalleysports.ca](http://www.comoxvalleysports.ca).
- Teams may also contact Scott at the CVSSC for a list of potential subs at [scott@comoxvalleysports.ca](mailto:scott@comoxvalleysports.ca).
- Teams may bring in subs whenever they are short players. Those subs must fill out a waiver prior to playing.
- In the spirit of sportsmanship, teams are expected to bring in subs of a similar skill level to those missing. Bringing in 'ringers' for games is heavily discouraged.
- Team captains are advised to run any subs past their opponents before the game, for their approval. This is designed to give a team a say in which player(s) they get to play and avoid the possibility of a ringer swinging the game result.
- Teams may borrow player(s) from another team (such as a team in a previous time slot), as long as said player(s) are needed to make a game happen, and meet the subbing requirements (similar skill level of player(s) replacing, and agreed upon by opposing team).

### Defaults:

- If a team is unable to field the minimum 3 players within 15 minutes of the scheduled game time, the result will go down as a 10-0 victory for their opponent.

- Any team that defaults more than once in a season can face further league discipline, including potentially being removed from the league.
- Because the leagues are about playing, and having fun, an opponent may waive their right to a default victory before the game and choose to play. They may even loan players to make it happen. But both teams must agree before the game whether the result will count in the standings. That decision cannot be reversed after the fact.

\*If a game is a default, please split up players and play for fun. The idea is to have as good of a time as possible, each time out. Ask the coordinator for ideas or help to make it work if you need it.

## SECTION 5 – MATCH PLAY AND FORMAT

### Game Format:

- Each game night is a one-hour time slot. Please arrive early to change, warm up and stretch before taking over the floor for your time slot and start your games promptly. Teams have the option of a short halftime, if they wish to take it. If one team desires a halftime, then teams must take a break.
- Games will finish as soon as the time slot is complete and/or the coordinator blows the whistle. The team with the higher score will be awarded the win. There are ties in the regular season, but ties in the playoffs will proceed to a shootout.
- **Playoffs Shootout Procedure:** Any game tied within the final 5 minutes will stop and proceed directly to a shootout. Please notify a coordinator to help, if this is the case, though teams may also agree to proceed on their own: (a) Teams will each pick three shooters, and do RPS to determine which team shoots first; (b) Players will start with the ball at the center of the floor and only begin forward when the goalie is ready; (c) The player must generally keep their momentum moving forward in an attack towards the net; (d) Players are unable to play the rebound and it is a dead ball if they contact it again after the initial goalie save; (e) If the game is still tied after the initial 3 players per team have shot, teams will alternate turns in a sudden-death format until one team wins; (f) Each player cannot take a second shot until all his/her teammates have already shot once.
- Games are 5-on-5 (including the goalie). This league is 'open co-ed' which means it is open to both genders, but teams do not have to have a specific ratio of guys and girls playing.
- Teams must be able to field at least 3 players and a goalie for the game to count.
- All games are self-officiated, with players calling their own fouls. Team captains are responsible for making sure their teams know/follow the rules, make the correct calls, and should always address any issue(s) with the other team's captain first, and then the CVSSC coordinator if further help is needed.
- **Mercy Rule:** If a game hits a score differential of 10 goals at any point (ie. 10-0, 14-4, or 17-7), that is considered a mercy score. Scorekeeping is stopped and teams are encouraged to play on for fun. This is to discourage stronger teams from running up the score in a mismatch, as there is no benefit in the standings.

## SECTION 6 – GENERAL RULES

### Starting The Game:

- During warm-up, team captains should meet to discuss any issues, whether there should be a halftime, and get their game started promptly. If a team wants to switch ends at half for any reason (perhaps there is an advantage to being at one end), then the two teams will switch ends to even things out.
- Before starting the game, both teams should make sure the playing surface is free of any garbage, bags, water bottles, clothing or other obstacles that could affect play and/or safety.
- Any late-arriving player(s) should wait for the appropriate time (like a break in action) to enter the gym so as not to disrupt a game in progress.
- Each half will start with the typical N-H-L faceoff, won only using the stick. Players cannot use their feet or body to win the draw. Teammates must give at least five feet of space, but can attempt to get the ball once the faceoff has commenced.

### Boundaries and Re-Starting Play:

- All areas of the gym (walls, ceiling, inanimate objects, etc...) are generally considered to be in play, as long as the ball returns to the playing surface.
- If the ball leaves the field of play (behind player benches, caught up in dividing wall area, etc...) and does not return either on its own or with a quick, fluid movement by a player to drag it back into play, it is out of bounds.
- To put an 'out of bounds' ball back into play, possession is given to the team that did not touch it last before it went out of bounds. It is an indirect pass from the approximate area where the ball left the field of play.
- Despite most areas of the gym being considered 'in play,' the walls, dividing wall area and corners are all areas where safe play is expected from all players at all times. Players should make their attempts on the ball, not the body, and try to avoid contact in any area where even an accidental collision could result in injury.
- Off any foul or infraction (including hand balls), the ball is put back into play from either the nearest corner or from the nearest side at half. These are all indirect kicks, which means another teammate must touch the ball first before a goal can be scored.
- When a ball is being put back into play, the opposing team must give at least 5 feet of space.
- **Re-Starting After a Goal:** The scored-upon team brings the ball to center, like in soccer. Once they make a pass forward or backward, the game resumes. The ball must be passed from center before a shot can take place. The opposing

team must give at least 5 feet of space until a pass is made. Players cannot cross half until the ball is moved.

- **Re-Starting After a Goalie Stoppage:** As soon as the goalie covers the ball and freezes play, the attacking team is to start making their way behind the 'attack line' in the gym (red line near half). The goalie can choose to wait for the attacking team to clear that line before moving the ball, or move it quickly on their own. Play resumes as normal once the goalie has distributed the ball.

## **General Game Play Rules and Guidelines:**

- **Self-Officiated:** Teams are required to call their own infractions and penalties and settle goal disputes the best they can. Any players acting too aggressively or physically will be asked to leave and may be subject to further league action. A list of penalties and infractions and how to handle them is further down in the rules..
- **Substitutions:** All subbing for players (excluding the goalie) is done 'on the fly.' This simply means players can freely sub on and off during the game action. A player must be within 10 feet of the bench area before their substitution can enter play.
- **HighSticks:** Sticks should be kept below waist level at all times. High sticking a ball (above the waist) is a stoppage of play and change of possession. High sticking a player is a penalty.
- **No Slapshots:** Slapshots are banned in our leagues, even in warm-up. The slapshot is destructive to gym floors and dangerous for players due to the increased velocity and wilder backswing/follow-through. The stick should go no higher than mid-calf height on the backswing or follow through.
- **No Stationary Screens:** Players can run through the crease in a moving screen/attempt to deflect a shot, but may not set a stationary "screen" to block the goalie's line of sight. Any goal scored on a stationary screen is disallowed. (This is both for the player's safety and also to prevent any physical play cropping up in front of the net.)
- **No Diving/Lying Down to Block Passes/Shots:** Players are requested to stay on both feet at all times to keep their faces away from both the ball and wayward sticks. While some players may want to block shots or passes by getting low, it's not safe and increases the possibility of injury.
- **Goalie Interference:** Players cannot interfere with the goalie's movement in the crease. If a goalie is unable to attempt a save due to interference from the opposing team, it is no goal.
- **Goalie Stoppages:** The goalie must have at least one foot in the crease to smother a ball for a stoppage. Players must not slash at a ball that is covered by the goalie, but can play within the crease and can make a play for a loose ball.

- **Kicked/Batted Balls:** Players cannot kick or bat the ball into the net with anything but their stick. However, a ball that deflects off a body part and in is a goal.
- **Dislodged Net:** If the net is dislodged during game play, the goalie/teammates should put it back in position as soon as possible. Any goal with a question over whether it went in because the net was dislodged should be discussed by the two teams. The default will be no goal when the net is dislodged on a score, but with so much variance on what could happen to lead to that situation, team captains are given leeway to make a different call.
- **Pulling the goalie:** Is not permitted. Teams can have a maximum of 4 players and one goalie on the court.
- **Shielding the Ball:** Players with possession of the ball cannot stick out their rear end and back up towards an opponent/the net to advance it. This type of play is too difficult to defend without being overly physical.

## Penalties and Infractions:

Regardless of intent, these infractions require the game to stop and at minimum a change of possession – with the play re-starting from the nearest corner or the side at half. Teams are required to call their own infractions/penalties and players should immediately check with an opponent to ensure they are OK if it resulted in a trip or injury. Any penalties that are from overly aggressive or physical play or that take away a scoring chance, should be punished with a penalty shot for the opposing team. Any players playing too physically or aggressively can be asked to leave and may be subject to further discipline, including expulsion from the league:

- **High-Sticking:** Please keep control over your stick at all times. A high stick (above waist) on a ball is a change of possession. A high stick that contacts a player is a penalty shot.
- **Tripping/Hooking:** Players are allowed to make a stick lift to separate a player from the ball, but should do so in a controlled manner with the intent of getting the ball. Teams have the discretion to call a penalty shot on a trip or hook, especially if it is on an aggressive play or takes away a scoring chance.
- **Reckless/Physical Play:** Any aggressive body contact, slashing, intentional contact with a goalie, cross checking, butt ends or other kind of dangerous play will not only be punished with a penalty shot, but may also result in further discipline from the league.
- **Threatening Actions:** Verbal abuse and/or threats will not be tolerated. Please report any such incidences to the coordinator and the CVSSC.
- **Fighting:** Results in immediate ejection from the game and immediate lifetime ban from all CVSSC leagues.

**Team Communications:** (a) Team captains are advised to keep in touch with each other throughout the game if there are any issues that pop up, and make any changes as necessary. It is important that these communications be kept civil, with the idea of 'fixing' any problems and not placing blame. If needed, the next step is to involve the coordinator; (b) Teams should refrain from yelling at each other for any reason, and if anything needs clarified, work together to pause the game action and sort it out; (c) If a game is going very well, let the opponent know how much fun you're having. Floor Hockey is a fast, amazing sport, with so much great stuff happening constantly, and everyone loves to hear good things.

**Sportsmanship and 'Funnest' Teams:** Play to have fun. Each game should be a good time for everyone involved on both teams. And if you play a team that was above-and-beyond terrific to play against, please let the coordinator and/or CVSSC management know.

## SECTION 7 – SCHEDULES, SCORES, STANDINGS AND PLAYOFFS

### Schedules:

Schedules will be posted online and accessible via the 'Schedule' link on each sport's page online within 48 before the first game, with team captains and singles registrants all notified via email. Each subsequent schedule update will follow the same protocol. Please double-check your schedule online before each game and notify the CVSSC of any issues or discrepancies at [scott@comoxvalleysports.ca](mailto:scott@comoxvalleysports.ca).

### Scores:

Game Scores and Spirit Scores should be submitted to the CVSSC rep by both teams at the end of the game. If a CVSSC rep is not available, both teams should email the info to [scott@comoxvalleysports.ca](mailto:scott@comoxvalleysports.ca) within 24 hours. If only one team submits a score, that score will be used in updating the standings.

### Standings:

The Standings Page of the CVSSC will be updated on a weekly basis (typically by Friday mornings) and can be viewed online at: [www.comoxvalleysports.ca/league-standings.php](http://www.comoxvalleysports.ca/league-standings.php). Players can click their team name to review game scores, while the standings page also has filters to allow players the ability to search the results for various seasons and years.

- **Final standings** – Are determined by number of points (two for a win; one for a tie; zero for a loss).
- **Tie-breakers** – (1) Spirit points totals (in all leagues that collect spirit points); (2) Most wins; (3) Points differential; (4) Head-to-head result; (5) Coin flip or RPS.

### Playoffs:

Playoffs will be scheduled to take up anywhere from 1-3 weeks of the scheduled season. All teams make the playoffs, but typically only the top four seeds have a shot at finishing in first place to allow for closer games and hopefully allow for as much fun as possible. Playoff matches will be set by the CVSSC based on the standings at the end of the regular season and teams will be notified via the 'schedule' protocols listed above.

\*The CVSSC reserves the right to alter the schedule and adjust match-ups, tiers, and tweak the final standings in order to make sure everyone is playing at the level most suitable to them, and to maximize safety and fun.

## **SECTION 8 – WAIVERS, FIELDS AND FACILITIES**

### **Waivers:**

All players must sign a waiver, which outlines the CVSSC's liability and sportsmanship policies (among other things), before playing a game. Players need only sign a CVSSC waiver once since 2014 to be allowed to play, regardless of the number of sports or seasons they are participating in. Captains must make sure any new players and subs have signed a waiver before playing. Coordinators will typically have access to waivers they can sign.

### **Field and Facilities:**

The CVSSC rents playing fields and facilities from various providers throughout the Comox Valley. Please be exceptionally respectful of each location, whether indoors or outdoors, to ensure the CVSSC maintains a great reputation and can continue booking many of the best fields and facilities available and offer these recreational sports leagues. Here are some important things expected from our players:

- **Smoking/Drinking:** Please follow proper protocol on smoking. And unless otherwise specified, the CVSSC establishments are alcohol free.
- **Garbage:** Please clean up after yourself before leaving – including water bottles.
- **Damages:** You will be held responsible for any damages you cause. Please be respectful of the facilities and fields we rent.
- **Footwear:** Bring clean, non-marking shoes for indoors. No metal cleats allowed for outdoors.
- **Changing and Warm-Up:** Please arrive 15 minutes early to get changed and warm up. But make sure your warm-up doesn't affect games in progress, and for indoor sports, please don't play with balls in the halls. It is disruptive and can cause damage.

### **Alcohol Policy:**

The CVSSC rents public facilities for all its leagues and tournaments. These facilities, unless otherwise stated, are unlicensed. As such, the consumption of alcohol during CVSSC league games and tournaments (unless in a licensed area) is not legal and prohibited.

### **Sponsor Bars:**

If players would like to socialize over some food or drink, the CVSSC sets up Sponsor Bar deals at various locations. Check out the details online at:

<http://www.comoxvalleysports.ca/sponsors.php>.