



WESTERN REGION RINGETTE LEAGUE

Dear Western Region Ringette League Members,

Please let me introduce myself, my name is Shelley Handley, and I am the new Chair of the WRRL. I have many years working as a board member and coach with the Dorchester Ringette Association and as the Chair of the WRRRA Provincial Committee. I look forward to serving all of you to the best of my ability over the next year.

I am hoping that your seasons have started off on a good note! There have been some changes made to game play rules at the WRRL level and I wanted to make sure that all stakeholders (association boards, coaches, referees, players and parents) were aware of the changes.

JOINT LEAGUE

Currently, the Western, Southern and Central regions are looking at combining for the 2024-2025 season. This will allow for easier movement of players when associations are unable to host all age groups or levels of play at the regional level. It will also allow for a variety of competition, especially when a small number of teams may exist in an age group. Currently U12A, U16B and U19B are combined, with teams being divided based on location.

MIXED TEAM RULES

The WRRL has added new rules for mixed teams. The rules only apply to LEAGUE play and not tournaments. The WRRL has no jurisdiction over tournament play.

The rules are as follows:



(U14 - U19) (League Play and Regionals only)

When possible, WRRL will try to create an all female loop and a mixed team loop. In order to reduce animosity between teams, it is suggested that a minimum of 6 teams be in each loop to make it viable.

There will be no more than 2 male players on the ice for one team at any given time with the ability of the teams to agree otherwise at least 24 hours in advance. In the event a team has a small bench and is short female players and cannot meet the 2 males only requirement, they would play a 5 on 4, unless otherwise agreed upon 24 hours in advance.

Goalies WILL count in the number on the ice. Therefore, if a team has a male goalie, they may only have one male skater. If a team has a female goalie, teams may have 2 male skaters on the ice.

If the mixed team has a penalty, this DOES NOT impact the amount of males allowed on the ice. At any given time during a game a team may only have 2 male players on the ice unless otherwise agreed upon 24 hours in advance.

Two males on the ice at any given time supersedes the fair ice policy for the WRRL.

FAIR PLAY RULES

The WRRL has also brought back the fair play rules originally created by Ringette Ontario. These rules are as follows:

FAIR PLAY RULES (League play and Regionals only)

	U10 & Under	U12	U14	U16	U19
Game Type	Regional	Regional	Regional	Regional	Regional
League Development Games (before Jan 1st)	E	E	E	E	E
League Competition (after Dec 31 st)	E	E	D2	D2	D2
Regionals	E	D1	D2	D3	D3



EQUAL (E)

Is defined as equal ice-time every game to the best of the coach, allowing for the uncertainty in the frequency in stoppages of play.

DISCRETION 1 (D1)

Is defined as equal ice time every game, however, there is the ability for a coach to use select players in the last two (2) minutes of regulation time and overtime.

DISCRETION 2 (D2)

Is defined as equal ice time every game, however, there is the ability for a coach to use select players in the last two (2) minutes of regulation time, overtime and any situation that does not require five (5) skaters vs. five (5) skaters.

DISCRETION 3 (D3)

Is defined as equal ice time every game, however, there is the ability for a coach to use select players in the last two (2) minutes of regulation time, overtime and any situation that does not require five (5) skaters vs. five (5) skaters. Further, coaches have the ability to use players anytime during post round robin play as they decide.

GOALTENDERS

Goaltenders have the option of changing at half-time of each game or playing full games as long as they have equal game time throughout a season and/or tournament. Goaltenders are restricted to a one game differential throughout the season and during tournaments. Further, coaches have the ability to use goaltenders anytime during the post round robin play as they decide. There is an expectation that throughout the season, each player will have accumulated approximately the same amount of ice time, to the best abilities of the coach.

ENFORCEMENT

Breaking of any of the above rules does not affect game play at that moment. Penalties WILL NOT be given to offending teams. The WRRL does not expect, nor do we want referees to monitor this - there is a process in place to make a complaint that coaches, WRRL Representatives and Association Presidents are aware of.



CODES OF CONDUCT

All members of Ringette Ontario have had to sign codes of conduct. The WRRL expects all members to follow those codes. We currently face a crisis in sport in regards to referees - we simply do not have enough. We must encourage young folks to take an interest in the position, however when they see coaches, players and parents treating some of them with so little respect, it is hard to recruit. When I have spoken with ringette players in Dorchester, the main response I get is that there is no way they want to put themselves in a position that if they make an error, they could be verbally or physically attacked. They simply are afraid. Parents also do not want to put their children at risk and do not encourage their players in this pathway. We as a sport must stop this cycle. Please note that WRRL will not tolerate any abuse of the referees by anyone and if we receive reports of such an investigation will be launched and players, parents and coaches could be banned from the league.

It is also important to remember that every player on the ice is a child. Threatening or encouraging injury to a player at any age group will not be tolerated and in some cases, police may become involved. Our behaviour as adults reflects on the behaviour of our children. This is not new. So, please let's all behave appropriately and respectfully at the arena.

It is my goal to ensure that everyone, but especially the players, have a fun, exciting and enjoyable season at the regional level. I am hoping some of the above policies will remind everyone that our players play because they love the sport, and it is our job as adults and mentors to encourage and nurture that joy.

Sincerely,
Shelley Handley
WRRL Chair