



**International Bubble Hockey Federation / St. Louis Blues
National Championships,
Presented by ICE**

Tournament Format and Rules

The purpose of this document is to provide an outline and provide a detailed explanation regarding the IBHF National Championships to be held in St. Louis on March 23-24.

At this time, the number of teams participating is unknown. We must therefore be flexible in devising formats that will provide for a fair and enjoyable experience for all competitors. Participants playing in both the singles and doubles divisions will be guaranteed a **minimum of 14 games** played for the weekend. Players will also have an opportunity to play practice games with other participants before and after the official event play. Both singles and doubles divisions will follow the same format outlined below.

Location and Equipment

The Preliminary Round and Championship Round, up to the final four, will be played at Jacques Sports Bar in the Sheraton St. Louis, across from the Savvis Center. The Final Four will be played on the Savvis Center concourse prior to the start of the Blues/Avalanche game.

A minimum of 8 Super Chexx Bubble Hockey games will be available for play. Games will be set-up on Thursday night and serviced to the highest IBHF standards (ice surfaced cleaned, domes cleaned, gear boxes and player washers replaced, if necessary, etc.)

Player Check-in

All teams are expected to check-in one hour prior to the start of competition. This will give the tournament officials time to get an accurate count of teams and to finalize the format. All players participating in the next day's singles tournament should also state their intention at this time. All entrance fees are due at check-in.

Friday, March 24 – 4:00pm Registration Deadline
5:00pm Opening Ceremony
Doubles Play immediately following opening ceremony

Saturday, March 25 – 8:00am Registration Deadline
9:00am Singles Play begins

Single players who wish to play in the doubles division will be paired by the IBHF with other similar players. Players must notify the registration table at time of player registration.

Trophies

Trophies will be awarded at the Savvis Center following the Final Four, as follows:

SINGLES – Champion (1)
Runner-Up (1)

MS DOUBLES – Champions (2)
Runner-Ups (2)

Round Robin Preliminary Round

The tournament will begin with a round robin. The purpose of the round robin is to establish seedings for the best-of-3, single-elimination rounds.

If the number of teams is small, we may use a round robin format in which each team plays every team once. More likely, we will have to divide up the teams into pools, with each team playing the teams in their pool once. We will attempt to make the number of teams in each pool consistent by adjusting the number of pools. **Round Robin pools will consist of a minimum of 6 teams**, which guarantees a minimum 5 games played, per participant/team.

Teams pool assignment will be based on random drawing. Considerations will be made to place teams who participate in the same regional league into different pools, but not guaranteed.

Play will commence once we have established the pools, the number of games to be played, and the assignment of tables. Participants will be expected to record the winner of each game and the final score. Scoresheets will be provided to assist in this. Scoresheets must be initialed by all players and turned into the tournament director after each pool is completed.

A coin flip will be held prior to each game, winner chooses the side of table he prefers.

At the completion of the round robin, there will be a short intermission while results are compiled and the seedings for the next round are calculated. Teams will be seeded from highest to lowest based on their performance in the round robin using the following criteria:

1. Wins
2. Goals Differential (Goals For (GF) minus Goals Against (GA))
3. Goals For
4. One game playoff

All overtime goals will be counted, so teams should play vigorously through the full game, even if the outcome has been determined at the end of regulation time.

Best-of 3, Single Elimination Championship Round

The first elimination with the highest seeded team paired with the lowest seeded team, second highest seed versus second lowest seed, and so on.

In the event we have an odd number of teams, the highest seeded team(s) will receive a bye.

A coin flip will be held prior to the first game, winner chooses the side of table he prefers for game 1. Teams will alternate sides thereafter.

A best of 3 series will be played. The first team to win two games moves on to the next round, the loser is eliminated. Participants will continue to record the winner and final score of each game on their scoresheets.

Elimination rounds will continue until we are down to the final four teams. The semi-final round and the finals will be held at the Savvis Center on March 24th prior to the start of the Blues/Avalanche game.

Officiating

Representatives from the IBHF, the St. Louis Blues, and Tournament Committee members will serve as officials during tournament play. Representatives will be divided equally to ensure a minimum of one official per game table. Any dispute will be referred immediately to the official scorer's/registration table for final ruling by an IBHF official.

Rules of Play

1. There are three, 90-second periods.
2. Side of play is determined by coin flip. In a best-of series, players shall alternate sides between games.
3. The puck must stay in the net, and be registered by the game unit for a goal to be scored.
4. If regulation time ends in a tie, or a team is losing by 1 goal, then the game will be played until there is one decisive winner. Due to tie-breaking procedures, the final goal will be played out, regardless of the score. Example: Even though a team is winning by 2 or more goals, play will continue until the final goal is scored.
5. If the game malfunctions, the game will be replayed no matter what the score is.
6. Roughing the game will result in immediate disqualification. Examples of roughing include: lifting, shaking, moving, and kicking the game, striking the dome, etc.
7. Players must be respectful and show good sportsmanship while playing. Foul language is discouraged. Spectators are not permitted to touch the game during play, including pushing the "Boo" button.
8. Have fun at all times!

FACEOFF CLEARING

In official IBHF Tournaments, the center iceman is not permitted to score directly off the face-off. The center iceman must clear the puck to a second player before a goal can be scored. The second player can be either the same team or an opponent player, excluding the opponent's goaltender.

PENALTIES

Penalties are called when violations occur involving Play Stalling, Spinning Players, and Shaking Goaltenders.

1. Play Stalling. Players are not permitted to stall play by deliberately holding puck for extended periods of time. A player may request a 5-Count (counted as "one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, etc.) from the referee if their opponent is stalling play. The player receiving the count must then pass or shoot at the end of the 5-Count. Failure to move the puck on the 5-Count will receive a Penalty.

2. Spinning Players. Players are permitted to spin players for a maximum of 1 second per instance. Excessive spinning will result in a Penalty.

3. Shaking Goaltender aka "Popcorning". Players may shake the goaltender back and forth to the point of moving the puck. Goaltender shaking that causes the puck to move on the ice surface will receive a Penalty.

Penalties are enforced in a **two-step process**:

First Penalty: Player will receive a warning from the referee. (yellow card)

Second Penalty (same rule): Player will be disqualified by the referee. (red card)

DOUBLES PLAY

Each player on a doubles team is required to operate a minimum of two bubble hockey positions. Each player must be in an upright-standing position at the end of the bubble hockey machine.