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CCHA TO UNVEIL SHOOTOUT IN 2008-09 CAMPAIGN *Bonus Point Awarded to Tiebreaker Winner*

FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich. – The Central Collegiate Hockey Association announced today that an NHL style three-player shootout will be used in the 2008-09 season to determine a winner for all of the 168 regular-season conference games that are tied after 60 minutes of regulation play and five minutes of overtime.

"The shootout has proved to be an exciting addition to hockey at a variety of levels and we are anxious to bring it into college hockey. The drama it creates is very popular with fans, and importantly, today's players love it," stated CCHA Commissioner Tom Anastos, whose conference becomes the first of college hockey's six Division I men's leagues to adopt the shootout.

"At the same time, the NCAA rules and ice hockey committees have allowed us to implement this tie-breaker protocol so that every regular-season league game will have a winner while preserving the integrity of the national rankings because CCHA games decided by a shootout will still be considered ties for NCAA purposes. Bonus points awarded will impact the conference standings only."

The shootout concept has been enthusiastically endorsed by Greg Hammaren, the Vice President and General Manager of FSN Detroit, which will televise 17 CCHA regular-season and playoff games in 2008-09.

"This is a bold decision and I think it's a great one," said Hammaren. "College hockey is already one of the most exciting sports in America, adding the shootout just adds to the excitement."

The CCHA has also approved the following point system for regular-season play; Two (2) points for a win in regulation or overtime, one (1) point for each school if the game is tied at the conclusion of the five-minute overtime period and one (1) point is awarded to the team who wins the shootout.

A total of 90 regular-season games have wound up tied over the past three CCHA seasons; 31 in 2007-08, 26 in 2006-07 and 33 in 2005-06. Another 29 games have been decided in overtime during the same time frame; 12 last season, 10 in 2006-07 and seven in 2005-06.

University of Alaska Fairbanks Athletic Director Forrest Karr, who serves as chairperson of the CCHA Council and is also a member of the NCAA Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Rules Committee, noted that considerable thought has gone into the decision.

"The game belongs to student-athletes, coaches and fans," said Karr. "As administrators, it isn't our place to change things without adequate input. For the past two years, we've received feedback from all constituencies. We've also been given a direction to make decisions that reward speed, creativity and skill, while maintaining the game's safety and integrity. By allowing shootouts, the rules committee gave conferences a means to enhance game excitement. We are always careful when making changes as there can be unintended consequences. In this case, the CCHA Council was comfortable that shootouts will have no direct impact on the RPI and also felt that shootouts are in the best interest of the game at this time."

Overtime will continue to be played similar to regulation time with five skaters for each team (penalties excepted). The shootout may also be used for non-conference games hosted by CCHA schools pending the mutual consent of their opponents although, once again, any game deadlocked through overtime would be considered a tie for NCAA purposes.

Michigan State coach Rick Comley said he believes implementation of the shootout is one of the changes that college hockey needs to continue to generate increased interest in the sport.

"I'm excited about our league adopting it and it's going to add a tremendous amount of excitement to the game. Fans will really love it and players love working on shootout moves in practice so they're going to love doing it in a game. So it's a win-win situation when you look at it from that perspective," Comley added.

Nebraska-Omaha coach Mike Kemp thinks that adoption of the shootout will serve to keep the CCHA at the forefront of college hockey and continue the national leadership role that has really evolved since the conference took the lead in trying to eliminate obstruction from the game.

"Shootouts are going to be great for our fans. They will keep people excited and in their seats right up until the last goal or save. It's going to be something that they will keep talking and raving about," he said.

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The NCAA Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Rules Committee voted early last month to allow conferences to experiment with a shootout in regular-season contests as a means to enhance the excitement of the game. The committee adopted the measures in hopes that conferences will use a shootout and provide feedback for future consideration.

The following will appear in the 2008-10 Rulebook to govern shootouts:

NCAA Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Rules Committee

FINAL CHANGES (Approved July 2, 2008)

Rule 6-56-b. Shootout.

"A shootout may be conducted at the end of the five-minute overtime period for advancement purposes, in conference games or by mutual consent of both teams."

Rationale: The committee received several requests from conferences to experiment with a shootout in regular-season contests as a means to enhance the excitement of the game. The committee proposes this allowance in the hope that conferences will use a shootout and provide feedback for future consideration.

Appendix B, Shootout Protocol. This protocol is only to be used in accordance with rule 6-56-b.

1. It is recommended that the ice surface be dry scraped in the middle of the ice through both creases.
2. At the end of the five-minute overtime period, the head official will instruct the timekeeper to put two minutes on the clock and immediately start the clock.
3. The other two officials will request a list of three shooters from each coach.
4. The head official will meet at center ice with the captains to explain the protocol during the two-minute period.
5. The goalkeepers remain in the same ends as the overtime period.
6. The home team has the option of shooting first or defending first. If Team A's first two players score, while none of Team B's players score, the shootout is over and Team A wins the shootout.
7. If the shootout remains tied at the end of three rounds, each coach will select a different shooter, this time in a sudden death situation. The first three shooters are ineligible until all other bench players have attempted a shot, if necessary. Each team has an equal number of chances to shoot before a winner is declared.

Notes

- Players serving penalty time shall not be eligible for the shootout.
- If a shooter is injured in the shootout, the player may be replaced in subsequent rounds by a player off the bench.
- If a goalkeeper is injured in the shootout, the goalkeeper may be immediately replaced by a goalkeeper off the bench. The injured goalkeeper may not re-enter the shootout.
- All players not actively participating in the shootout must remain on their bench.
- Goalkeepers may be substituted, but no warm-up time will be allowed.