2026-2027 USYF CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES RULES

The rules of this tournament shall be in accordance with FIFA, US Soccer Federation, and US Youth Futsal except as modified and approved herein. Download a copy of the most recent FIFA laws of the game.

Notable Rules or Rule Modifications from Previous Year

1. Age Matrix – All USYF Championship Series events will use the United States Soccer age matrix below.

2. Coach Background Check- All coaches and managers must complete a background check by the USYF provider. Previous background checks for other associations are not valid, even if they have been recently completed. For the link to the background check, refer to the Confirmation email received by the team manager after the team registered for the event.

3. Red card carryover - Unserved suspensions as a result of red cards in a State Championship and or a Regional Championship will be carried over. If a player is red carded in a State or Regional Championship, a one game suspension will be served in the next subsequent Championship Series event (i.e. Regional and or National Championship).

POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

HOST HOTELS

The Championship Series are Stay to Play events. ALL out-of-town teams must book rooms through the USYF Travel management company, **Refine Travel and Events (RTE)**. There are no exceptions to the Stay to Play policy. **RTE** has negotiated group rates and other amenities to make your stay comfortable, cost effective and in hotels close to the tournament venue sites.

IMPORTANT - Out of town team's application will not be accepted unless a booking with one of our host hotels is on record by the registration deadline. However, it is highly recommended that you book 3 weeks before that deadline as the rooms reserved for the tournament will be released back to the public.

CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES SCHEDULES

Schedules will be posted on the tournament website no later than the Monday before the tournament begins.

AGE DIVISIONS

Boys and U9 to U18

TEAM ELIGIBILITY

USYF Tournaments shall be open to all teams composed of properly registered youth players (as defined by the rules of the affiliated organization) in all age groups indicated on the tournament application form, provided such team is in good standing with its youth association. The US Soccer age group matrix will be used to determine tournament age groups. The oldest player on the roster dictates the age group the team will play.

US SOCCER AGE GROUP CHART 2026 - 2027 SEASON

Birth Year	Age Group	Birth Year	Age Group
8/1/2008 – 7/31/2009	U18	**8/1/2013 – 7/31/2014**	U13
8/1/2009 – 7/31/2010	U17	**8/1/2014 – 7/31/2015**	U12
8/1/2010 – 7/31/2011	U16	**8/1/2015 – 7/31/2016**	U11
8/1/2011 – 7/31/2012	U15	**8/1/2016 – 7/31/2017**	U10
8/1/2012 – 7/31/2013	U14	**8/1/2017 - 7/31/2018**	U9

**UPDATED 9-25-20243*

FOREIGN TEAMS - Must have a completed form from its Provincial or National Association approving the team's participation in the tournament. **USSF Permission to Host Foreign Teams**

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

All teams are required to present their United States Soccer Federation affiliated cards for each of their players/coaches at team check-in. These are the cards issued by their governing association used for identification purposes to play outdoor leagues and tournaments. These cards are issued by US CLUB, USYS, AYSO, or other similar US Soccer sanctioned organizations. Player/coach cards must be verified and include a photo - either laminated or digital. If you are not sure of a player's eligibility, ask, in writing, to the Tournament Director. If the player does not have a card issued from their association, see **Team Check-In** below for alternative identification options. **USYF cards issued by the local affiliate or other Futsal associations cards are not valid for age verification at team check-in as these documents are not age verified.**

Double Rostering Players in the same division not allowed - Players are not eligible to play on two different teams in the same division. A player may play up on multiple teams but is restricted to rostering on only one team in the same division - this includes combined age group divisions.

Maximum Roster Size

All USYF Championship Series Tournaments will have a maximum roster size of 14 players per team.

Adding Players to Rosters for National Championships

Up to four players may be removed and/or added to their Regional rosters subject to the roster maximum of 14. For example, two new players can be added to a 12 - player Regional Championship roster or a team with a Regional roster of 14 or could delete 4 players from that roster and add 4 new players to the National Championships roster.

United States Youth Futsal Player Registration – all players must be registered with USYF. Any player not currently registered with USYF, must pay $15.00 per player for registration. This fee is in addition to

the tournament entry fee. To be USYF registered, the player must be entered in the USYF tournament registration system, Media / Medical Release received and fully paid. Coaches and Managers do not have to pay for the registration fee. Players already registered with USYF for the current year (8/1/2026 to 7/31/2027) do not have to pay again.

United States Youth Futsal Inclusion Policy
Membership of US Youth Futsal is open to all futsal and soccer organizations and all futsal and soccer players, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators, and officials without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or national origin.

For the purposes of registration on gender-based teams, a player may register with the gender team with which the player identifies, and confirmation sufficient for guaranteeing access shall be satisfied by documentation or evidence that shows the stated gender is sincerely held, and part of a person's core identity. Documentation satisfying the herein stated standard includes, but is not limited to, government issued documentation or documentation prepared by a healthcare provider, counselor, or other qualified professional not related to the player. Documentation shall be submitted during the team check-in prior to the tournament or event.

US Youth Futsal recognizes 2 team gender classifications:

(1) Teams with females only are considered girls teams.
(2) All other teams are considered boys teams.

TEAM, COACH AND PLAYER REGISTRATION
All teams must register on-line using the tournament registration link found on the tournament website. After registering their team on-line, each team manager receives a Confirmation Email of receipt of their application to the Championship. Teams will be accepted on a first come/paid, first served basis. In some cases, a division may have an unworkable number of teams or be over-subscribed, in these cases, the Tournament Director will work with the USYF Director of Sanctioned Events, as needed, to determine final team acceptances.

The confirmation email contains instructions as to how to log into the registration site to complete registration. Player information required includes, but is not limited to name, assigned jersey number, date of birth, home address and one parent email address. Players entered will comprise the team's Official Tournament Roster.

US Background Check

USYF has adopted US Soccer's Safe Soccer Clearance program (US Soccer Learning Center) for both background checks and SafeSport management. This system will require background check every 2 years from date of completion and SafeSport updates every year.

1. Coaches AND Managers access the US Soccer Learning Center here: https://learning.ussoccer.com/safe-soccer

2. Log into your account. **IF** you do not have an account, please create one. Do not create a second account.

3. Complete **Phases 1 and/or 3** if they are due as noted on the site.

Each manager, coach or assistant coach must have a valid ID and be listed on an Official Tournament Roster for any team within their club. If a manager or coach is ejected, an assistant may conduct the team. If the assistant is also ejected, or there is no assistant, the game will be forfeited. In no case will a team be allowed to participate without a properly registered coach or assistant. Each team will only be allowed to have three coaches on the bench (this includes a possible medical trainer). All members of the coaching staff must be listed on either the Official Tournament Roster for that game or on an alternate Official Tournament Roster for a team within the same club.

Each Championship Series event has their own deadline for adding players and/or coaches to rosters (typically 7 days prior to event start date). Please review the Tournament Detail Page for specific information. In extreme cases, or cases of force majeure, the Tournament Director may make exceptions to this deadline.

TEAM CHECK-IN AND REQUIRED AGE VERIFICATION DOCUMENTS

Team check-in will be held at a designated location. Please refer to the Tournament Details Page for specific address and time. Players do not need to be present. Team manager or adult team representative must attend with required documents. Electronic images of the documents are also acceptable.

Player and Coach Identification Needed at Team Check-in:

- Player/Coach cards for each player as discussed in **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY** above **OR**
- A Copy of a birth certificate **and** a photo of the player **OR**
- A copy of a birth certificate **and a photo ID**. **OR**
- Valid driver's license **OR**
- Passport **(required for foreign teams) OR**
- Government Issued Identification i.e., Green Card

At check-in, Tournament Staff will conduct credential checks, including UYSF player waiver acceptance and coach and manager background check completion. Staff will confirm Proof of Age documents and compare the printed roster to the player identification presented. Any players or coaches who have not successfully completed this process will be considered ineligible and removed from the tournament roster. Upon approval, each team will receive an Official Tournament Roster. The Official Tournament Roster is to be carried throughout the tournament and presented to the referee staff prior to each match. The Official Roster may be presented electronically. Be sure you have either a hard copy or electronic copy of your Official Tournament Roster with you as it is required by the official to start the game. If the roster is misplaced, there may be a charge to reprint a duplicate roster. The proof of age documents listed above in Player Eligibility must be present and made available at each game if requested by Tournament Staff.

PRE-GAME CHECK-IN

Pre-game check-in procedures will begin 15 minutes prior to each match. The team must present their Official Tournament Roster to the referee staff at game check-in. Any team using an ineligible player will forfeit all matches played and will be eliminated from the tournament.

Players and coaches not certified by the tournament staff will not be allowed to participate.

LAWS OF THE GAME

All games shall be in accordance with the FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game. Exceptions to The Laws of the Game are listed below. Other exceptions specific to a particular location may be listed under House Rules in the Tournament Detail Page. Official futsal goals (3m x 2m) with aluminum, steel, or other hard surfaced goalposts, will be used in all Championship Series competitions.

MODIFICATIONS TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME FOR ALL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES EVENTS

LAW 1: Pitch, Dimensions

In facilities where there are no marked lines, but a difference in floor color can be distinguished as out of play, the referee will use the line where the different floor colors meet. If using a line of different colors, tape should be used between the goalposts to match the depth of the goal posts.

LAW 4: Players' Equipment

Each player must have a clear and visible number on the back of their jersey – this includes the goalkeeper. The shirt number of each player must be the same as the player's shirt number listed on the game card. If the numbers are not the same, the referee is not to allow the player to take part in the match until the numbers are the same (ex: the player changing his or her shirt, or the game card being changed).

Any cast worn by a player MUST be wrapped appropriately using foam and bubble wrap. The wrapped cast must not be used in a dangerous manner. The final decision on safety is at the discretion of the match referee, Tournament Director and the on-site Referee Assignor.

We will not be enforcing the FIFA Player Equipment Law regarding Knee and Arm protectors. Due to current access to safety equipment for youth players, we will allow each player to wear appropriate safety equipment regardless of the color of the player kit.

USYF will not require the use of bibs by substitute players in the Championship Series. Please refer to the Tournament Detail Pages for each State and Regional Championships' policy.

LAW 5: The Referee

2 (two) referees will officiate the match and some matches may have a third referee appointed. The referees are responsible for keeping time, score and fouls. Referees may appoint volunteers to help record; one adult from both the home and the away teams and would be responsible for staffing the score table at half-court. Volunteer duties are to assist the referee with record keeping of goals and fouls accumulated based on specific direction from the referee.

Powers and Duties - Referees may act against team officials who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and warn them, caution them or send them off from the pitch and its immediate surrounds, including the technical area. If an offender cannot be identified, the senior coach present in the technical area will receive the sanction.

LAW 7: The Duration of the Match

- Two (2) twenty-four (24) minute halves**
- 3-minute halftime
- For semi-final and final games, during the last two minutes of play if the score differential is less than 4 goals (3, 2, 1 or 0 goal difference), at the referee's discretion, the clock can be stopped if it is determined that time-wasting techniques are being used.

- The end of period is signaled by the time clock buzzer, not the referee whistle per the Law 5 amendment. If a clock buzzer is not available, the referee whistle will serve as the signal for the end of the period.
- Abandoned Matches will not be replayed
- USYF does NOT require teams to switch benches at half time. Events who require the changing of benches will include that information on the Tournament Detail page located in the Rules section of the event website.

Law 15: The Kick-In

The ball must be stationary on the touchline at the point where it left the pitch or the nearest point to where it touched the ceiling.

RULES OF THE COMPETITION

- No Heading per US Soccer guidelines for U11 divisions and under.
- Official tournament balls shall be used: Ball size 3 for U12 and younger; Ball size 4 for U13 and older.
- If players arrive late to the court after the start of the match, a **check-in procedure** is required to enter the game. Once the game's official(s) verify the player is eligible and with the permission of the center referee, the player may enter the court.
- Games that require a winner will be determined by penalty kicks under the Law 10 Determining the Outcome of a Match.
- Forfeit and Abandoned matches: If a team does not report for a match, plays a match with an ineligible player, or if a team reports to the match with less than 3 players and it is 5 minutes past the scheduled start time, except in cases of force majeure, the team will be considered as having forfeited the match and 3 points will be awarded to the opponent with the score of 3-0. In the case of an abandoned match where the game has started and a team refuses to continue to play or leaves the facility before the end of the match and has already achieved a better result (Refer to Tournament Point Guidelines and Tiebreakers) at the time of abandonment, that result will stand. The tournament committee will review each scenario independently and generally, except in cases of force majeure, the offending team may be excluded from further participation in the competition and all previous matches may have the scores changed to the same result so that the competition is fair for all other teams in the bracket.
- In the case of force majeure, the tournament committee will notify the teams of the tournament plan.
- If at any point in the play-offs, a team chooses not to continue, USYF reserves the right to move an alternate team forward into its position based on total points and tiebreakers. Teams who choose not to continue may not be invited to participate in future USYF events.

HOME TEAM

The team listed first on the schedule is the Home team. The Home team is to wear white/lighter color jerseys. If the home team complies and there is a conflict, the visiting team must change jerseys. If the home team does not comply and there is a color conflict, then the home team must change colors.

HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

USYF takes head injuries seriously. If any player has a serious head injury during a match, USYF recommends the player to be evaluated with extreme precaution by a trained medical professional or onsite trainer, if available. We ask that coaches, families, and players all follow the best-practices shared

in SafeSport and Concussion Training. It is our recommendation that any player exhibiting signs of concussion or serious head injury return to play only after written clearance from a medical provider is received.

CONTROL OF SIDELINE CONDUCT

Players, reserve players, managers, coaches, and fans are expected to conduct themselves within the letter and spirit of the "Laws of the Game". The Tournament Staff has the authority and the responsibility to remove any person(s) from the tournament for abuses of conduct, in addition to any specific disciplinary action brought about by any other authority.

The manager/coach will be responsible for the behavior of their fans and the referee will have the authority to warn and ultimately send off any manager/coach and the fans who behave in an abusive or disruptive manner.

POST GAME PROCEDURES

Both teams should show a display of sportsmanship and face each other at half court and clap for the opponent. The coach or manager of both teams will ensure their respective sideline areas are clean and that all trash is in containers.

It is the responsibility of the coach/manager to retrieve their Official Tournament Roster card from the referee at the conclusion of the match.

DISCIPLINE - EJECTIONS

Ejections can be the result of one red card in a match or 2 yellow cards (cautions) in the same match. A player, manager or coach ejected from a match will have an automatic minimum one (1) game suspension regardless of the cause of the ejection (next scheduled match). The tournament committee may take additional disciplinary action against a team or individual for serious offenses, including but not limited to additional game suspensions, suspension from the remainder of the tournament, and/or non-eligibility for future tournaments. The referee reports the ejection to the tournament committee along with a written report. The Tournament Committee will note ineligibility on the game card(s) for the ejected coach or player. A Red card suspension can only be served with the team with which the suspension was delivered (you may not serve your suspension with an alternate team).

When ejected, the individual must immediately leave the technical area. Depending on the nature of the incident, the Tournament Staff can review the details and determine whether the individual must leave the facility. For the remainder of their suspension neither coach nor player can be in the technical area during the match but may sit in the stands. Coach cannot instruct nor communicate with the team in any manner and the suspended player cannot wear team uniform while deemed ineligible.

REPORT OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

For United States teams, USYF utilizes the game card filled out by the referee as an incident report.

For CONCACAF teams, the tournament committee will notify USYF and the US Soccer Federation of disciplinary action taken, and that the Federation will transmit the disciplinary action taken or required to that team's provincial or national association.

PROTESTS

There will be no protests. Referee and Tournament Staff decisions are final.

DISPUTES

Referee decisions are considered final and not eligible for dispute. Video replay will not be reviewed. For non-referee decisions (ex: player eligibility, scoring discrepancies, or disputes over tournament rules), disputes may be written and filed with the Tournament Committee. All decisions are considered final after tournament committee review.

EXTERNAL CONDITIONS/WEATHER, etc.

We make every effort to accommodate all games due to space/court limitations. If a game or the entire tournament is canceled due to acts of God or field conditions, no refunds will be given under any circumstances. The tournament committee holds sole authority for delay, suspension, or cancellation of play.

TERMINATED GAMES

If the referee terminates a match for reasons other than field conditions, the Tournament Disciplinary Committee will decide the result of the match after reviewing the match report and written testimony of both coaches.

CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL CEREMONIES

After each Championship Final Game an awards ceremony will take place in the Awards Area. Out of respect for the other team, all teams should proceed immediately to this area after their final match to conclude award ceremonies in a timely manner. Awards will be presented to both Champions and Finalists.

REFEREES

If you are interested in joining the referee pool, please contact the assignor listed on the Tournament Detail Page.

GENERAL RULES

Products and behavior prohibited by the facility are not allowed in the facility, including but not limited to outside beverages and food, verbal abuse, all animals that are not certified service animals, etc. The tournament reserves the right to remove and or ban individuals violating the general rules.

REFUNDS - No Refunds will be given.

DETERMINATION OF POOL PLAY WINNERS

TOURNAMENT POINT GUIDELINES AND TIEBREAKERS

In pool play there will be no overtime given. Standings in a division or pool will be determined by:

- 3 points for a win
- 1 point for a tie
- 0 points for a loss

Tiebreaker - If teams tie in points, the division or pool winner will be determined by:

1. Head-to-head result; if no clear winner,
2. Net goal differential, only a maximum of seven (7) goals differential per game will count, if no clear winner
3. Fewest goals allowed if no clear winner
4. Total Goals For (max of 7 per match)
5. Penalty Kicks (5)

USYF CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES BRACKET PLAY

Division play and playoffs are determined by the number of teams and pools in a division. Depending upon the division configuration, a team could play as many as 3 games in one day.

Divisions with 4 teams – 1 pool - Each team plays each other once. The 1st and 2nd place teams advance to the finals.

Divisions with 5 teams – 1 pool - Each team plays the teams within the pool. In **USYF State and Regional Championships**, the Champion is determined by the team with the most points after their four - game pool play, and the Finalist is determined by the team with the second most points. There is may not a finals game. This is up to each Championship Series event.

In **USYF National Championships**, the team with the most points and the second most points will advance to the finals.

Divisions with 6 teams - 2 pools of 3 teams - Each team plays the teams within their pool. After each team has played their two pool games, points are calculated, and temporary standings are generated within each pool. The temporary standings are used to determine the order of play for the cross-pool games, which are the guaranteed third game for each team. The third-place teams of Pool A and Pool B will play each other in the consolation game, completing their third and final game and are eliminated from the tournament.

Using the temporary standing generated from the two pool games, the team with most points from Pool A vs. team with 2nd most points from Pool B. Team with most points from Pool B vs. team with 2nd most points from Pool A. The cross-pool games are semi-finals with winners advancing to the Finals.

Divisions with 7 teams – 2 pools, 1 pool of 4 teams and1 pool of 3 teams – Pool A has 4 teams and Pool B has 3 teams. All teams play each team in their pool.

After all pool games are played, the first-place team in Pool A plays the second-place team in Pool B and the first-place team in Pool B shall play the second-place team in Pool A. **These are semifinal games. Winners of each of these games go to the finals.**

The third-place team in Pool A shall play the third-place team in Pool B in a consolation match.

Divisions with 8 teams - 2 Options For your tournament's option refer to the Rules section of the tournament's website.

Option A- 2 Pools of 4 with Semi-finals - Each team plays the teams within their pool. The 1st and 2nd place teams of Pool A and B advance into the semi-final round where the 1st of Pool A vs. 2nd of Pool B and 1st of Pool B vs. 2nd of Pool A. The winners of the semi-finals advance to the finals.

Option B - 2 pools of 4 teams NO Semi-Finals - Each team plays the teams within their pool. The 1st place team of Pool A and the 1st place team of Pool B advance to the finals. There are no semifinals in this option.

Divisions with 9 teams - 3 pools of 3 teams - Each team plays the 3 teams within their pool. After each team has played two games in their pool, points are calculated, and teams will be seeded into the playoff round. Teams will be seeded from the team with most points (#1 seed) to team with least points (#9 seed).

The knockout rounds begin with #9 playing #8 as a Play-In game. The winner of the Play In game advances to the Playoff Knockout round and will be seeded as the #8 Seed. The loser is eliminated from the tournament. There are no points generated from the Play-In game for Knockout seeding.

Pairings for the initial playoff round may be adjusted by the tournament committee to avoid two teams that already played each other in the pool stage. For example, If the #1 seed has already played the #8 in Pool play, pairings may be adjusted so that the #7 seeds would play the #1 seed and the #2 seeds would then be matched up against the #8 seed, etc. When making those decisions, consideration for adjusting the opponent would be based on matching up with a similarly ranked opponent to the team that you have not already played. After initial seeding, opponents will play based on the bracketing - no additional re-seeding or opponent adjustments will be made.

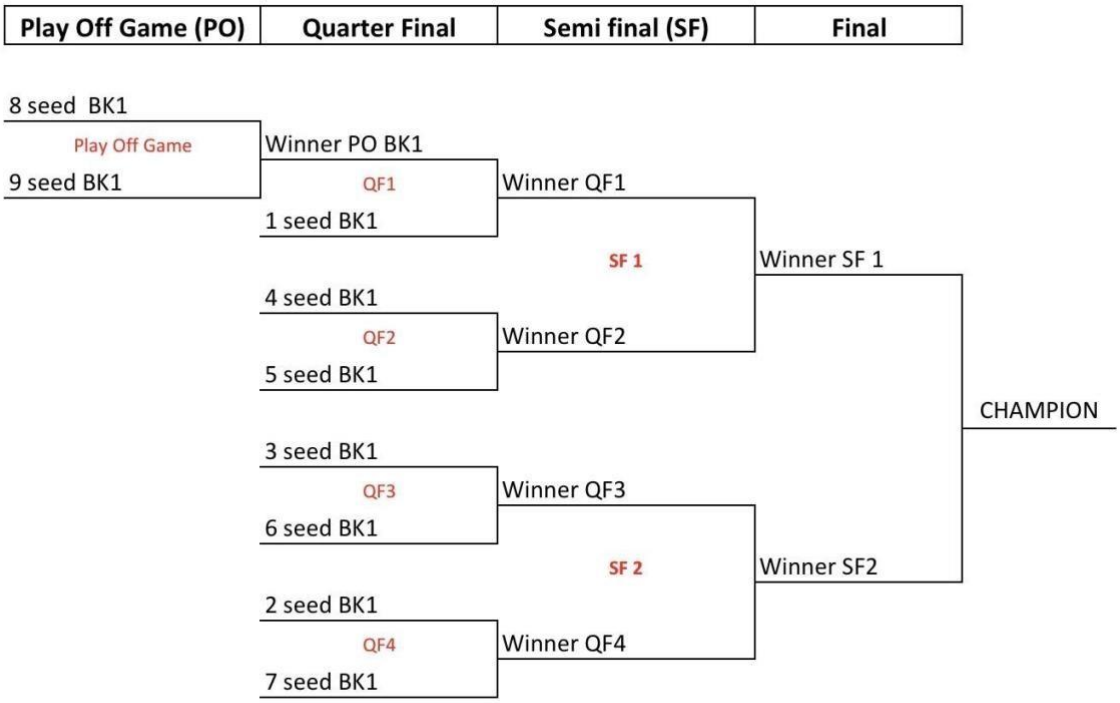
Quarter-Final games pairings

- QF 1 - Winner of play-in-game (winner of Play In game becomes #8th seed) vs #1 seed
- QF 2 - #4 seed vs #5 seed
- QF 3 - #3 team vs #6 seed
- QF 4 - #2 seed vs #7 seed

Semi-Final Pairings

- SF 1 - Winner of QF 1 v Winner of QF 2
- SF 2 - Winner of QF 3 v Winner of QF 4

The winners of each of the Semi-final games will advance to the Finals



Division of 10 teams - 2 Options - For your tournament's option refer to the Tournament Detail Page, located in the Rules section of the tournament's website.

Option A - 3 pools, one pool of 4 teams and 2 pools of 3 teams - Pool A has 4 teams, pool B and C consist of 3 teams each. Pool A will play each team in its pool to determine the winner of Pool A. **The team with the most points in Pool A advances to the semi-finals.**

Pools B and C consist of 3 teams in each pool. Teams will play the other two teams in their pool (2 games within the pool). After each team has played two games in their pool, points are calculated and temporary standings are generated within each pool. The temporary standings are used to determine the order of play for the cross-pool games, which are the guaranteed third game for each team in brackets B and C.

Cross-pool play begins using the temporary standing generated from the two pool games. The team with most points from Pool B vs. the team with 2nd most points from Pool C. Team from Pool C with the most points vs. the team from Pool B with 2nd most points, giving each team their third game. **The winners of these cross-pool games advance as semi-finalists.** The two third place teams of Pool B and Pool C will play a consolation game, completing their third and final game and are eliminated from the tournament.

Semi-finalists will be identified as:

- Semi-finalist with most points
- Semi-finalist with 2nd most points
- Semi-finalist with 3rd most points

- Wildcard* (Semi-finalist with 4th most points)

*Wildcard - In a 10-team division, the wildcard team is the semi-finalist with the 4th most points from pool play. The teams eligible for the wildcard are the second, third and fourth place teams of Pool A and the losers of the cross-pool games between B and C. The wildcard is the team with the most points from their 3 pool / cross-pool games. If a cross-pool game is tied at the end of regulation, the winner shall be determined by penalty kicks and advance as a semi-finalist. The loser of the cross-pool game will receive one point that was earned by the regulation tie. The point earned will be included in calculating the wild card. The third-place consolation teams from B and C are not eligible for wild card consideration.

The winner of Pool A, the two teams making the semi-finals from the cross-pool games and the Wildcard team will advance to the semi-final rounds.

Semi-finalists will be paired as:

- Semi-finalist with most points vs semi-finalist with 4th most points
- Semi-finalist with 2nd most points vs semi-finalist with 3rd most points

If two of the semi-finalists have already played each other in pool or cross-pool play, the pairing will be:

- Semi-finalist with most points vs semi-finalist with 3rd most points
- Semi-finalist with 2nd most points vs semi-finalist with 4th most points

The winners of each of the Semi-final games will advance to the Finals..

Option B - 2 pools of 5 teams - Each team from Pool A plays the other 4 teams in their pool. Each team from Pool B plays the other 4 teams in their pool. The 1st place team from Pool A and the 1st team from Pool B will advance to the finals. In a State or Regional Championship, there may not be a final. The team with the most points will be crowned Champion; the team with 2nd most points will be the finalist. Please see Tournament Detail page for information.

Divisions with 12 teams - 3 pools of 4 teams - Each team plays the teams within their pool (3 games of pool play). Points are calculated and 1st place teams of pool A, B and C and the Wildcard* team will advance to the semi-final rounds. In one semi-final round, the team with the highest point total from pool play will play the Wildcard. In the other semi-final round, the pool winners who have the 2nd and 3rd highest point total from pool play will play each other. The winners of the semi-finals will advance to the finals

***Wildcard - In a 12-team division,** the Wildcard team is the team with the 4th most points from pool play. The Wildcard team plays the team with the most points from pool play, unless the two teams have previously played against each other during the tournament. When this exception occurs, the Wildcard will play the semi-finalist team with the second most points accrued during pool play.

Divisions with 14 teams - 2 Pools of 4 teams and 2 pools of 3 teams. Pool A and Pool B consist of 4 teams. Teams in Pool A and B will play the teams in their pool (3 games of pool play) to determine Pool A and Pool B winners. **Winners of Pool A and B will advance to the semi-finals.**

Pool C and D consist of 3 teams in each pool. Teams will play the other two teams in their pool (2 games within the pool). After each team has played two games in their pool, points are calculated, and temporary standings are generated within pools C and D. The temporary standings are used to determine the order of play for the cross-pool games, which are the guaranteed third game for each team.

Cross-pool games between C vs D begin. The team with the most points from Pool C vs. Team with 2nd most points from Pool D. The team with the 2nd most points from Pool C vs. Team from Pool D with the most points, giving each team their third game. **The winners of these games advance as semi-finalists.** The two 3rd place teams of Pool C and Pool D will play a consolation game, completing their third and final game.

Semi-finalists will be identified as:

- Semi-finalist with most points
- Semi-finalist with 2nd most points
- Semi-finalist with 3rd most points
- Semi-finalist with 4th most points

Semi-finalists will be paired as:

- Semi-finalist with most points vs semi-finalist with 4th most points
- Semi-finalist with 2nd most points vs semi-finalist with 3rd most points

If two of the semi-finalists have already played each other in pool or cross-pool play, the pairing will be:

- Semi-finalist with most points vs semi-finalist with 3rd most points
- Semi-finalist with 2nd most points vs semi-finalist with 4th most points

The winners of each of the Semi-final games will advance to the Finals.

Divisions with 16 teams - 4 pools of 4 teams - Each team plays the teams within their pool (3 games of pool play). Points are calculated and 1st place winners of pool A, B, C and D will advance to the semi-final round.

Semi-finalists will be identified as:

- Pool Winner with most points
- Pool Winner with 2nd most points
- Pool Winner with 3rd most points
- Pool Winner with 4th most points

Semi-finalists will be paired as:

- Pool Winner with most points vs Pool Winner with 4th most points
- Pool Winner with 2nd most points vs Pool Winner with 3rd most points

The winners of the semi-finals will advance to the finals

Divisions with 18 teams - 2 brackets of 9 teams, each bracket has 3 pools of 3 teams - Each team plays the 3 teams within their pool. After each team has played two games in their pool, points are calculated, and teams will be seeded into the playoff round. Teams will be seeded from the team with most points (#1 seed) to team with least points (#9 seed) in each of the two brackets.

The Play Off games begin with each bracket's (BK) #9 playing #8. The winners of each bracket's Play Off game advances to the Round of 16 and will be seeded as the #8 Seed. The loser is eliminated from the tournament. There are no points generated from the Play Off game for Round of 16 seeding.

Pairings for the Round of 16 may be adjusted by the tournament committee to avoid two teams that already played each other in the pool stage. For example, If the #1 seed from BK1 has already played the #8 seed BK1 in Pool play, pairings may be adjusted so that the #7 seeds would play the #1 seed and the #2 seeds would then be matched up against the #8 seed, etc. When making those decisions, consideration for adjusting the opponent would be based on matching up with a similarly ranked opponent to the team that you have not already played. After RO16 initial seeding, opponents will play based on the bracketing - no additional re-seeding or opponent adjustments will be made during quarter finals and semi-final games.

Round of 16 game

Teams will play in their respective brackets, BK1 (Pools A, B, C) and BK2 (Pools D, E, F) through the Round of 16 R16 Quarterfinals and Semi-finals, with pairings arranged by seeding as follows

Bracket 1 R16 Pools A, B and C

- R16 game 1 - #1 v #8
- R16 game 2 - #4 v #5
- R16 game 3 - #3 v #6
- R16 game 4 - #2 v #7

Bracket 2 R16 Pools D, E and F

- R16 game 5 - #1 v #8
- R16 game 6 - #4 v #5
- R16 game 7 - #3 v #6
- R16 game 8 - #2 v #7

Quarter finals Bracket 1

- QF 1 - winner RI6 game 1 v winner R16 game 2
- QF 2 - winner RI6 game 3 v winner R16 game 4

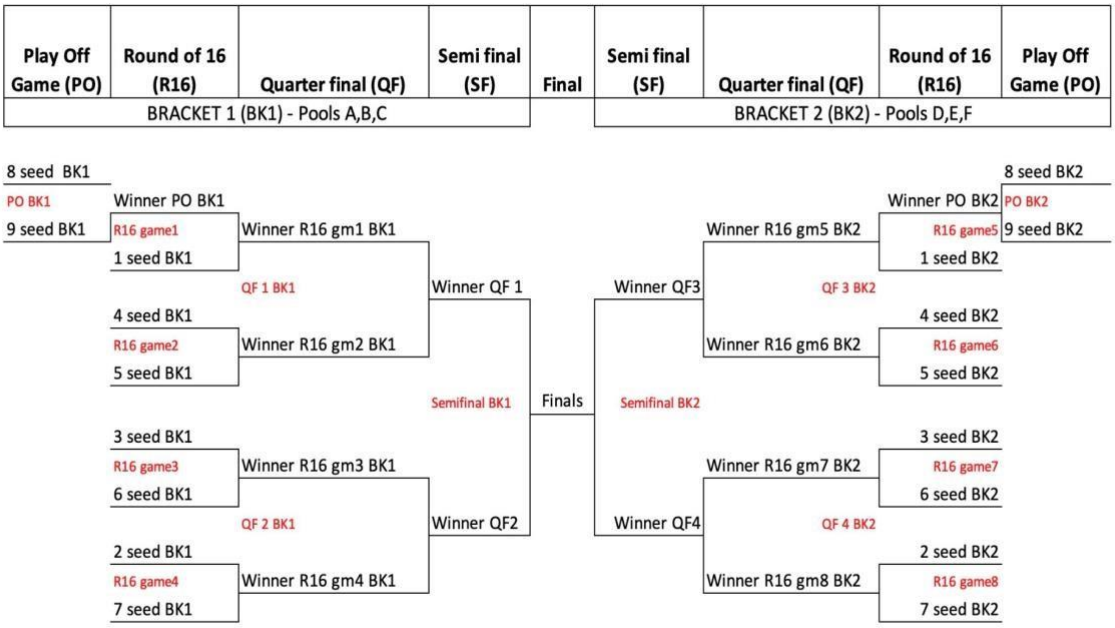
Quarter finals Bracket 2

- QF 3 - winner R16 game 5 v winner R16 game 6
- QF 4 - winner R16 game 7 v winner R16 game 8

Semi-final games - Winners of each quarter final will advance to semi-finals

- winner of QF1 v winner of QF2
- winner of QF3 v winner of QF4

Finals - The winners of each of the Semi-final games will then advance to the Final.



Divisions with 20 teams - 4 pools of 5 teams - Each team plays all the teams in its pool (4 games each). At the end of pool play, points are calculated and 1st place winners of pool A, B, C and D will advance to the semi-final round.

Semi-finalists will be identified as:

- Pool Winner with most points
- Pool Winner with 2nd most points
- Pool Winner with 3rd most points
- Pool Winner with 4th most points

Semi-finalists will be paired as:

- Pool Winner with most points vs Pool Winner with 4th most points
- Pool Winner with 2nd most points vs Pool Winner with 3rd most points

The winners of each of the Semi-final games will advance to the Finals.

Playoff Games ending in ties at regulation

If at the end of a match where a winner must be decided and the score is tied, the match goes directly to penalty kicks to determine the winner of the match. Five (5) PKs will be taken by each team and if the score is still tied at the end of that phase kicks continue until one team has scored one goal more than the other from the same number of kicks.

Procedure: Before kicks from the penalty mark start:

- Unless there are other considerations (e.g., pitch condition, safety, camera placement, spectator seating behind goal, etc.) or the competition regulations specify otherwise, the referee tosses a coin to decide the goal at which the kicks will be taken.
- The referee tosses a coin and the team that wins the toss decides whether to take the first or second kick.
- All players and substitutes are eligible to take kicks from the penalty mark, except those players who, when the match or extra time finishes, are injured or have been sent off.
- Each team is responsible for selecting, from the eligible players, the order in which they will take the kicks. The referees do not need to be informed of the order.
- **If, at the end of the match or extra time, and before the kicks from the penalty mark start, one team has a greater number of players (including substitutes) than its opponents, it may choose to reduce its numbers to the same number as its opponents and the referees must be informed of the name and number of each player excluded, if any. Any excluded player is not eligible to take part in the kicks (except as outlined below).**

Determining the Outcome of a Match (Law 10)

- A goalkeeper who is unable to continue before or during the kicks may be replaced by a player or substitute excluded to equalize the number of players, but the replaced goalkeeper takes no further part and may not take a kick.
- If the goalkeeper has already taken a kick, the replacement may not take a kick until the next round of kicks.

During kicks from the penalty mark

- Only eligible players, the referees and the other match officials are permitted to remain on the pitch.
- All eligible players, except the player taking the kick and the two goalkeepers, must remain within the center circle or either on or close behind the halfway line.
- The goalkeeper of the kicker's team must remain on the pitch, outside the penalty area, approximately in line with but at least 5m away from the penalty mark and on the opposite side of the pitch to the benches and the second referee.
- An eligible player may change places with the goalkeeper.
- The kick is completed when the ball stops moving or goes out of play or when the referees stop play for any offense; the kicker may not play the ball a second time.
- The referees keep a record of the kicks.
- If the goalkeeper commits an offense and, as a result, the kick is retaken, the goalkeeper must be cautioned.
- If the kicker is penalized for an offense committed after the referees have signaled for the kick to be taken, that kick is recorded as missed and the kicker is cautioned.
- If both the goalkeeper and kicker commit an offense at the same time:
    - if the kick is missed or saved, the kick is retaken and both players are cautioned.

    - if the kick is scored, the goal is disallowed, the kick is recorded as missed and the kicker is cautioned.
- If, during the kicks from the penalty mark, one team's number of players is reduced, the team with more players may choose to reduce its numbers to the same number and the referees must be informed of the name and number of each player excluded, if any. Any excluded player is not eligible to take further part in the kicks (except as outlined above).

Subject to the conditions explained below, both teams take five kicks:

- The kicks are taken alternately by the teams.
- Each kick is taken by a different player, and all eligible players must take a kick before any player can take a second kick.
- The above principle continues for any subsequent sequence of kicks but a team may change the order of kickers.
- If, before both teams have taken five kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could score, even if it were to complete its five kicks, no more kicks are taken.
- If the scores are level after both teams have taken five kicks, kicks continue until one team has scored one goal more than the other from the same number of kicks.
- Kicks from the penalty mark must not be delayed for a player who leaves the pitch. The player's kick will be forfeited (not scored) if the player does not return in time to take a kick.