

2024 NIRSA Region 2 Tournament

Rules of Play

The championships will be governed by NCAA rules with the following modifications:

DURATION OF GAMES AND HALFTIMES:

Running time will be used throughout the entire tournament. All games up to the semifinals will consist of 35-minute halves separated by seven-minute halftime. Semi-final and final competitions will have 35-minute halves separated by ten-minute halftime. Pool play games that are tied at the end of regulation time will remain tied. Playoff games that are tied will go into overtime play. Overtime play will consist of one 15-minute, sudden-victory overtime period. If still tied at the end of the overtime period, kicks from the penalty mark will be taken to determine a winner. Please note that the tournament format and game length may change due to a lower number of entries in that division.

GAME CHECK-IN CONDUCT:

At least fifteen minutes prior to the start of each scheduled game, the Field Marshal will check the teams in for play. Each player must have a physical government or university picture ID that must match the team's player roster. **Digital IDs ARE permitted to be used.** A team that fails to properly check in with the Field Marshal will forfeit that game. The Field Marshals are there to assist you with anything you might need and to handle the administrative concerns of the match. They do not have any authority over any decision made by the referee. Immediately after the match, the Field Marshal will make sure the match card is signed by each team representative and given to the tournament representative.

FORFEITURES:

Teams failing to check-in (15) minutes prior to their scheduled kick-off time or failing to report ready to play within (5) minutes of scheduled kick-off time may forfeit their match. All teams must have a minimum of (7) players present to start the match. Teams who have forfeited may continue in the tournament.

FORFEITED GAME GOAL DIFFERENTIAL:

In the Championship Division, a forfeited game will result in a 1-0 win for the winning team, which produces a +1-goal differential. In the Open Division, a forfeited game will result in a 2-0 win for the winning team, which produces a +2-goal differential. If both teams forfeit a game, they will both receive a loss, with no effect on goal differential.

PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT:

All players are required to wear shin guards under socks. No jewelry may be worn in competition, except medical alert or religious necklaces (taped to chest). Players shall wear approved footwear (no center cleats). All players must wear matching uniforms. All players must have a permanent number (minimum 6") on the back of their uniform, with no duplicated numbers on a team. Uniforms with taped or hand-written numbers will not be allowed. NO unpadded hard casts are permitted. If a player has a soft cast, the player must have a doctor's release and approval from the referee to play. NO knee braces made of hard, unyielding material are permitted unless hinges are covered on all sides with approved padding, and all its edges are overlapped. Players not in compliance will be CAUTIONED (yellow carded) and sent off the field until the changes are made and the requirement is met

SUBSTITUTIONS:

Substitutions are allowed during goal kicks (by either team), for an injured player (one for one), for a yellow card (one for one) although not mandatory, and after a goal has been scored. Substitutions by the team with possession of the ball shall be permitted prior to a restart by a throw-in and corner kicks. If the team in possession chooses to substitute, the team not in possession may substitute as well. If the team in possession chooses not to substitute, the team not in possession may not substitute. Substitutes entering before goal kicks, corner kicks, or throw-ins must wait at the halfway line prior to the ball going out of play, so that a team may not stall by sending a substitute in after the ball is already out of play. All substitutes must wear a colored jersey/vest that distinguishes them from all other field players.

COACHES & BENCH PERSONNEL:

All Coaches have total responsibility for the conduct of their players, substitutes, friends, and spectators at all times. Coaching from the sidelines (giving direction to one's own team on points of strategy and position) is permitted, provided:

- No mechanical devices are used;
- The tone of the voice is instructive and not derogatory;
- Each coach or substitute remains within 10 yards on their team bench side of the half-way line;
- No coach, substitute, or spectator makes derogatory remarks or gestures to the referees, other coaches, players, substitutes, or spectators;
- No coach, substitute, or spectator uses profanity or incites disruptive behavior of any manner. A team may have a maximum of 3 coaches, 1 athletic trainer, in their team area during the game. Any additional team personnel will be restricted to the spectator side of the field.

CAUTIONS AND SEND OFFS:

A player or coach receiving two cautions (yellow cards) in a single game is considered to have been sent off (red card). A player who has been sent off will not be replaced. A player or coach who has been sent off will not return for that game and will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled game. A player or coach who is sent off may be removed for more than one game, following the game when the sending off occurred, depending on the severity of the infraction. For the purpose of this Tournament, a Coach can be carded. A team will be disqualified from the Tournament if any player or coach fails to comply with the provisions of this section.

Any player that receives three yellow cards during the tournament will be ineligible for the team's next game, and pool play card accumulation carries over to bracket play.

Any player or coach that that is ejected from the final game of the regional tournament, and their team qualifies for nationals, will be ineligible for their team's first game at the National Tournament. All ejections at the regional tournaments must be reported to the National Tournament Director and the Co-Directors of Competition upon completion of the Regional Tournament for review. A player or coach who is ejected may be removed for more than one game depending on the severity of the infraction.

SUSPENDED AND TERMINATED GAMES:

If in the opinion of tournament officials, a game must be suspended (for reason), the game may be resumed but is subject to being ended not less than five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled start of the next game. If in the opinion of tournament officials, a game must be terminated for misconduct of players, bench coaches, or spectators, the offending team may be suspended from further play and forfeits that game and all remaining games. All previous points earned remain as played. Additionally, the sponsoring University will be contacted as appropriate.

If a game is terminated due to problems associated with the fields, including lighting for a night game, or due to the serious injury of a player (see the next section entitled "INJURY") the resumption of play for that game will be at the discretion of the tournament officials. Tournament officials may at their option conclude the game, require completion of the game or utilize kicks from the penalty mark to determine the winner of the game depending upon the circumstance and considering the potential effect of the game results on the standings of the teams.

INJURY:

Delays of the game will only be allowed for an injury requiring professional medical attention and the inability to remove the injured player from the field until and while the medical attention is being provided to the player. The delay will result in appropriate time being added to the full game time, based on the judgment of the referee and tournament officials. Otherwise, each game will be played with a running clock and no suspension of the clock time. However, all preliminary games will be terminated not less than five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled start of the next game. The failure to complete any game due to a serious injury requiring suspension of the gameplay shall be controlled by the preceding section," SUSPENDED AND TERMINATED GAMES."

The team captain, coach, and/or manager must advise the referee of the critical medical conditions of any player. Referees are instructed to stop the game immediately and summon medical staff if a player with a critical condition requires medical assistance.

DETERMINING POOL WINNERS/POSITIONING:

Teams will be awarded points on the following basis:

- Three (3) points for each Win
- One (1) point for each Tie
- Zero (0) points for each Loss

In the event of a tie in points at the end of pool play, the teams to advance will be determined as follows:

1. The winner in head to head competition
2. High goal differential (goals scored minus goals allowed)
 - Maximum of 5 points from any one match
3. Most goals for
4. Fewest goals against
5. Most total wins
6. Most shutouts

In a tie-breaking scenario involving more than 2 teams, the tiebreaker procedure will begin. Once one team is identified as different and both remaining teams are still tied, the tiebreaker procedure is restarted to identify the remaining order.

If a tie still exists after steps 1 through 6, the following procedure will be used for NCAA kicks from the mark.

- In a two-way tie, NCAA kicks from the mark will be taken thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled start of the next match.
- In a three-way tie, a three-way coin flip will be conducted. The two teams that tie in the coin flip will compete in NCAA kicks from the mark to eliminate one team prior to proceeding to NCAA kicks from the mark with the third team. The coin flip and time of the kicks will be determined at the fields.
- OPEN DIVISION ONLY: In a four-way tie, a drawing of lots will be conducted. Teams will draw either an A or B. Teams drawing A will compete in NCAA kicks from the mark to eliminate one team. Teams drawing B will compete in NCAA kicks from the mark to eliminate one team. The winners of A and B will then compete in NCAA kicks from the mark to determine final placement. The drawing and time of the kicks will be determined at the fields.

HOME TEAM:

In Pool Play, the Home Team is indicated on IM Leagues schedule. In Bracket Play, the Home Team is the higher-ranked seed. The Home Team will wear light jerseys/socks and provide the game balls.

PROTESTS:

Only protests of eligibility and misapplication of the Rules of the Game will be considered. PROTESTS OF JUDGMENT CALLS BY THE REFEREE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

To be valid and eligible for consideration, each protest:

- 1) Must be verbally lodged with the referee, field marshal, and opposing team coach or representative at the game site before entering the field of play or before leaving the game site.
- 2) The Tournament Director (Laura Shively) must be verbally notified of the intent to lodge a protest within 30 minutes of the end of the match or decision being protested.
- 3) Must be filed with the Tournament Director (Laura Shively) within 1 hour after the completion of the game being protested and include:
 - a) A legibly written copy of the protest, which must include full particulars of the grounds on which the protest is lodged
 - b) A legibly written copy of any information to be presented by witnesses

The Tournament Appeals Committee (tournament director, co-directors of competition, director of officials) will meet in closed session within a reasonable time after the receipt of the protest. If any documentation or “proof” is provided, it will be the sole discretion of the Committee on how to view/consider the proof/documentation.

The decision of The Tournament Appeals Committee will be considered final and not subject to further review.

The Tournament Appeals Committee reserves the right to adjust the schedule when the formal protest is received.

A game upon which a protest is upheld will be replayed at the earliest possible date. The date, time, and location of the match will be determined by the Tournament Appeals Committee.

Any sanctions levied by the Tournament Appeals Committee can only be effective at the championships. Recommended sanctions that would apply to the future tournament(s) must be referred to the NIRSA Championship Series Committee – Standards of Competition for review and decision.

WATER COOLERS

Water coolers will be provided on each field; however, it is the responsibility of the team to provide cups or water bottles. Drinking directly from the water spout **WILL NOT** be allowed.

INCLEMENT WEATHER OR ACT OF GOD:

In the event of inclement weather or an act of God that occurs once the games have begun, winners will be decided based on points earned up to that point, with any tiebreakers being determined using the protocol outlined above in numbered paragraphs 6 and 7 of the section entitled, "DETERMINING WINNERS".

FAILING TO PLAY GAME:

Teams voluntarily choosing not to play a game in the tournament will be removed from the tournament. Teams will receive a one-year sanction (Not allowed in the 2025 NIRSA National Soccer Championships). The team will also receive a \$200 financial sanction that must be paid prior to participating in future tournaments. Notice of this will also be sent to the institution's club administrator.

REGIONAL SANCTIONS:

Regional Coordinators may sanction teams they oversee that have participated in regional league play and regional tournaments. Examples of possible behaviors that could lead to sanctions may include: failing to play all scheduled games, demonstration of poor sportsmanship, destruction of property, and violation of the NIRSA Code of Conduct. This list is not all-inclusive. Team sanctions may include removal from league play, removal from regional tournament, withdrawal of the invitation to the regional tournament, removal from National Championships.

NIRSA WILL FOLLOW THE NCCA RULE (APPENDIX D) IN REGARD TO CONCUSSIONS:

If a game official suspects a player may have a concussion, they will stop play and direct the player to leave the game with an eligible substitute replacing them. At that time, the player will be examined by a tournament athletic trainer. That athletic trainer will determine whether the player may continue to play or be prohibited from playing due to a concussion. Only the tournament trainer may clear players of suspected concussion to return to participation.

Recognize and Refer: To help recognize a concussion, watch for the following two events among your student-athletes during both games and practices:

1. A forceful blow to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head;
-AND-
2. Any change in the student-athlete's behavior, thinking, or physical functioning (see signs and symptoms).

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Signs Observed By Coaching Staff Symptoms Reported By Student-Athlete

- Appears dazed or stunned.
- Is confused about assignment or position.
- Forgets plays.
- Is unsure of game, score or opponent.
- Moves clumsily.
- Answers questions slowly.
- Loses consciousness (even briefly).
- Shows behavior or personality changes.
- Can't recall events before hit or fall.
- Can't recall events after hit or fall.
- Headache or "pressure" in the head.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Balance problems or dizziness.
- Double or blurry vision.
- Sensitivity to light.
- Sensitivity to noise.
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy.
- Concentration or memory problems.
- Confusion.
- Does not "feel right."

An athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion, either at rest or during exertion, should be removed immediately from practice or competition and should not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. Sports have injury timeouts and player substitutions so that student-athletes can get checked.

IF A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED:

1. Remove the student-athlete from play. Look for the signs and symptoms of a concussion if your student-athlete has experienced a blow to the head. Do not allow the student-athlete to just “shake it off.” Each athlete will respond to concussions differently.

2. Ensure that the student-athlete is evaluated right away by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Immediately refer the student-athlete to the appropriate medical staff, such as a certified athletic trainer, team physician, or health care professional experienced in concussion evaluation and management.

3. **Allow the student-athlete to return to play only with permission from a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion.** Allow athletics, medical staff, to rely on their clinical skills and protocols in evaluating the athlete to establish the appropriate time to return to play. A return-to-play progression should occur in an individualized, step-wise fashion with gradual increments in physical exertion and risk of contact. Follow your institution’s physician-supervised concussion management protocol.

4. Develop a game plan. Student-athletes should not return to play until cleared by the appropriate athletics medical staff. In fact, as concussion management continues to evolve with new science, the care is becoming more conservative and return-to-play time frames are getting longer. Coaches should have a plan that accounts for student-athletes to be out for at least the remainder of the day.

Guideline on Concussions or online at www.NCAA.org/health-safety and www.CDC.gov/Concussion.