

SIN CITY Classic in Partnership with IGLFA

Football Tournament Rules & Laws of the game



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1 Introduction

1.1 IGLFA MISSION

The International Gay and Lesbian Football Association (IGLFA) exists to champion the power of football as a force for unity, pride, and equality. We empower LGBTQ+ athletes, fans, and allies by building a global community where diversity fuels strength, and inclusion is non-negotiable. On every field, we foster a space where everyone can compete authentically, free from prejudice. Through the spirit of the game, we break down barriers, shatter stereotypes, and inspire change—driving forward a future where football is a stage for pride, passion, and true equality for all

1.2 IGLFA Values



All tournaments shall be governed by the Laws of the Game as established by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) with the following modifications contained in this document.

References to the male gender in the Laws of the Game in respect of all Referees, Players, and Team Officials are for simplification and apply to all genders.

This document pertains to small-sided matches and may be adjusted accordingly to any variation of small-sided football competition (e.g.: 5v5, 6v6 7v7).



2 Authority Statement

2.1 Tournament Committees

To ensure fair governance, transparent decision-making, and consistent application of tournament regulations, the following committees shall be established. These bodies serve distinct functions in managing operational, disciplinary, and appeals matters during the tournament.

2.1.1 Tournament Committee

The **Tournament Committee** shall have full authority to interpret tournament rules, resolve unforeseen issues, and make final operational decisions during the tournament. It is responsible for supporting the Host Committee and ensuring fair representation of all stakeholders.

Committee Composition may include, but is not limited to:

- IGLFA Director of Referees or their nominated deputy
- One Flinta Committee Member (Subject to Flinta Participation in Tournament)
- One or more representatives from the Tournament Organising Committee

Note: In situations involving disciplinary matters, members of this Committee may serve concurrently on the Disciplinary Committee, provided there is no conflict of interest.

2.1.2 Tournament Disciplinary Committee

The **Tournament Disciplinary Committee** shall be responsible for reviewing and adjudicating any disciplinary incidents or protests occurring during the tournament.

Minimum Membership: Two (2) individuals, including at least one from the Tournament Organising Committee.

Potential Members may include:

- A referee appointed by the Director of Referees (not involved in the match in question)
- A representative of the Tournament Organising Committee

Members must remain impartial and must not have been directly involved in the incident under review.

2.1.3 Tournament Appeals Committee

The **Tournament Appeals Committee** shall hear and decide on any formal appeals submitted in accordance with Section 7.4 of this policy.

Minimum Membership: Two (2) individuals, including:

- Head of Tournament Organising Committee
- IGLFA Director of Referees or nominated deputy
- One neutral club representative (not associated with the appealing party or its opponent)

- Decisions of the Tournament Appeals Committee shall be final and binding for the duration of the tournament.

Neutrality is critical. No individual shall participate in an appeal decision if they could reasonably be perceived to benefit from the outcome.

2.2 Committee Intent & Oversight

The formation of these committees is intended to ensure:

- Timely and informed decisions on issues affecting tournament integrity
- Balanced representation from IGLFA, the Host Committee, participating clubs, and relevant event organisations
- A fair and transparent process for both operational and disciplinary matters

These committees shall work in close collaboration with each other and with tournament leadership to uphold the IGLFA's commitment to respect, equity, and fair play.

3 Tournament Structure

3.1.1 Competition Formats

The tournament can consist of distinct competition formats:

- Open 7-a-side
- FLINTA 7-a-side

Each format will have its own round-robin phase followed by a qualifying phase. Teams compete only within their designated format; there are no cross-format matches.

3.1.2 Round-Robin Phase - Group Assignment

Initial group assignments for the round-robin phase will be conducted randomly, with efforts made to avoid placing teams from the same city or country in the same group. These groups do not reflect competitive level or division.

Group Assignments for the round robin phase will be conducted as follows –

For 7 aside Open & Flinta will be randomly using an electronic system supporting the tournament organisation.

3.1.3 Qualifying Phase - Competitive Divisions

To ensure balanced competition, the Host Tournament Committee, in coordination with IGLFA, may subdivide the qualifying phase of each competition format into competitive divisions (e.g., Division 1, Division 2), depending on the number of participating teams.

3.1.4 Division Naming

Division names will be determined by the Host Tournament Committee in agreement with IGLFA.

3.1.5 Determining Champions

Where multiple competitive divisions exist within a competition format, the champion title will be awarded to the winner of Division 1.

4 Eligibility and Identification

4.1 Player Eligibility

All players must be **eighteen (18) years or older** to participate.

4.1.1 Registration

All players must be officially registered with the host organisation in order to compete.

4.1.2 Identification Requirements

Players must provide valid identification as determined by the Host Tournament Committee, in consultation with the IGLFA and/or SIN CITY Classic

4.1.3 On-Demand ID Verification

Tournament officials may request a valid **photo ID** showing **date of birth** at any time during the tournament, particularly if a formal challenge to a player's identity has been raised.

4.1.4 Individual Entry & Team Assignment

Players who don't have a team may be placed into one, depending on space, their Behaviour record, and payment of the correct registration fee, as decided by the Host Tournament Committee.

4.1.5 Team Registration Limits

Each player may only register with **one team, per division or group** and must appear on that team's final roster. Players are not permitted to play for multiple teams within their club or another club unless explicitly authorised by the Host Tournament Committee (e.g., to cover injuries that would otherwise prevent a team from fielding a full side).

4.1.6 Gender Inclusion

Participation in the tournament can be structured as follows:

- Players who identify as FLINTA — including women (cis and trans), intersex, non-binary, trans (binary and non-binary), and agender individuals — are eligible to participate in both the Open competition and the FLINTA competition.
- Cisgender men are eligible to participate only in the Open competition.

4.1.7 Disciplinary Suspension

Players suspended due to disciplinary action are not eligible to play for the duration of their suspension.

5 Team Eligibility

5.1.1 General Eligibility

All teams must be properly registered with the Host Tournament Organiser and must comply with the rules and regulations outlined in the tournament framework. Only registered players may participate in tournament matches.

5.1.2 Team Composition

a. Small-sided Teams (e.g., 7-a-side, 6-a-side)

- Each small-sided team may register a maximum of **thirteen (13) players**.
- During play, a team must field a **minimum of five (5)** and no more than **seven (7)** players.
- If a team is reduced to **fewer than five (5)** players, the match shall be **terminated**, and the team unable to meet the minimum requirement shall **forfeit** the match.

6 Match Start Eligibility

Teams that meet the match **starting time requirement** as outlined in Rule **5.1.2** shall be deemed eligible to play. Failure to appear or to be ready with the minimum number of players at the designated kick-off time may result in a **match forfeiture**.

6.1 Ineligibility

6.1.1 Definition of Ineligibility

Any **player, team, or club** that fails to meet the eligibility or identification requirements outlined will be considered **ineligible** for participation.

6.1.2 Consequences of Ineligibility

A team found to have fielded an ineligible player, or a team or club deemed ineligible shall:

- **Automatically forfeit the match** in question
- Be subject to further review by the **Tournament Committee**, which may impose additional sanctions, including but not limited to disqualification from the tournament or future IGLFA events

Note: It is the responsibility of each team to ensure that all players meet the eligibility and identification requirements prior to participation.

6.2 Player & Team Identification

6.2.1 Player Identification for Match Participation

All players must present **tournament-approved accreditation** before participating in any match. This requirement exists to ensure that only registered and eligible players take part in the competition.

6.2.2 Team Identification for Tournament Seeding

Teams shall be identified by the **official team's name listed on their Final Roster** at the time of registration. This name will be used for tournament scheduling, seeding, and results tracking.

Note: The Tournament Committee reserves the right to deny participation if identification is not satisfactorily verified or if the integrity of the competition is at risk.

7 Tournament Rules

7.1 Match Starting Times

7.1.1 Match Punctuality & Team Check-In

- All matches must begin at their **scheduled kick-off time**.
- Teams are required to **check in at Tournament Headquarters** or a designated check-in point **at least thirty (30) minutes** before their first match of the day.
- Check-in may include submission of a completed match roster with names and identification of all players, coaching staff, managers, etc. or any requested changes for that day.
- This roster shall constitute the official list of individuals permitted on the team bench.

7.1.2 Delays Due to Player Shortages

If a team is unable to field the **minimum number of players** (as defined in Rule 5.1.2) and this causes a delay, the **Tournament Organisers** may declare the team **ineligible to participate** in that match. A forfeit may be applied at the Committee's discretion.

- The determination and confirmation of a forfeit shall be made by the Tournament Committee, based on reports from match officials.

7.2 Number of Matches

7.2.1 Group Stage Match Allocation

All teams where feasible will play an equal number of group-stage matches, however adjustments may be made based on final registration number of teams.

7.2.2 Equal Participation in Qualifying Rounds

Each team where feasible shall play the **same number of qualifying matches**, regardless of group allocation.

7.2.3 Round-Robin Format

Group matches will follow a **round-robin format**, meaning each team will play **a set number** of other teams within its group. Teams may not necessarily play every other team in their group.

7.2.4 Cross-Group Matches

Where necessary, qualifying round matches may be scheduled **between teams from different groups**, subject to approval by the Tournament Committee.

7.3 Team Placement and Seeding

7.3.1 Random Draw

Teams will be assigned via a **random draw**.

- The draw must retain the element of randomness and fairness.
- Any restrictions applied (e.g., to avoid conflicts of interest) must not significantly compromise the random nature of the process.

7.3.2 Intra-Club Assignments

Teams affiliated with the **same club** where practicable should not be placed in the **same qualifying group**, where possible.

7.4 Determination of Standings

7.4.1 Point System – Round-Robin Matches

Points will be awarded in the group stage as follows:

- **3 points** for a win
- **1 point** for a draw
- **0 points** for a loss

7.4.2 Forfeited Match Points

- A team that forfeits a match will receive **zero (0) points**; the opposing team will be awarded a **win - three (3) points**.
- If **both teams forfeit**, neither team will receive points, and the match will be recorded as a **double forfeit - zero (0) points**.

7.4.3 Forfeited Match Score

The score of a forfeited match shall be recorded as a **3–0 victory** in favour of the non-forfeiting team.

This ensures a fair result for tie-breaker calculations and avoids penalising the non-offending team.

7.4.4 Tiebreakers

In the event of a points tie at the end of round-robin play, the following tie-breaking criteria will be applied **in order**:

- Head-to-head result** between the tied teams
- Goal difference** (goals scored minus goals conceded)
- Goal ratio** (goals scored divided by goals conceded)
- Disciplinary points** (1 point per yellow card; 3 points per red card) – the team with **fewer** points ranks higher
- Drawing of lots**, conducted publicly by a neutral party

7.4.5 Forfeits

If a team forfeits a match in a way that undermines fair competition, and the Tournament Committee determines that the forfeit resulted in a tactical or unsporting advantage, the team may face additional sanctions, which could include:

- Disqualification from the tournament
- Replacement by another eligible team, at the discretion of the Committee, in line with fairness and the integrity of the tournament

A match will be considered a forfeit if:

- The team abandons a match that is already in progress
- The team fails to field the minimum number of players required to start or continue the match
- A player is found to be ineligible under **Rule 4.1.5**

7.4.6 Match Manipulation or Integrity Violations

Any team found to be **deliberately manipulating the outcome of a match** to improve their own standing, influence seedings, or disadvantage another team, may be immediately disqualified.

Examples of manipulation include, but are not limited to:

- Intentional underperformance
- Conceding avoidable goals
- Deliberate use of unfair tactics or match strategies that compromise the integrity of play

The Tournament Committee may also **override the result of the match** and substitute a fair outcome, taking into account the **spirit of the game**, the **conduct of the team and individuals involved**, and the **broader tournament context**.

7.4.7 Disciplinary Consequences for Integrity Violations

In serious cases, the matter shall be referred to the **IGLFA and SIN CITY Classic Body**, which may impose further sanctions including:

- Suspension of the **individual(s)**, **team**, or **club** from future IGLFA-sanctioned tournaments
- Official notification of outcomes to **tournament organisers** to support cross-tournament enforcement

7.5 Results Reporting

7.5.1 Match Roster

It is the responsibility of the team manager to ensure that every player knows their designated number. If a player receives a disciplinary sanction (yellow or red card), it is essential that this number is accurately reported. All teams are expected to uphold the highest standards of honesty and integrity in the reporting of disciplinary matters or correcting an error recorded in the post-game report.

7.5.2 Post-Match Reporting & Discrepancies

- **Referees** must submit the final score and any disciplinary actions to the Tournament Committee or their designated representative **immediately following the match**.
- It is the **responsibility of the team manager (or nominated deputy)** to review and verify the accuracy of the referee's report on the **match report** or the **electronic application** after the game.
- Any **discrepancies or concerns** must be raised with the Tournament Committee **as soon as possible** after the match.

- The Tournament Committee will investigate the issue in consultation with the match officials and render a final decision.

7.5.3 Standings & Result Visibility

The official tournament **standings** and **match results** where feasible will be made available to participants and the public within a **reasonable timeframe** following match completion. Standings may be posted:

- On official noticeboards at tournament venues
- Through tournament apps or websites
- Via other channels communicated by the Host Committee

The Host Organiser is encouraged to use **digital solutions** to ensure transparency, reduce errors, and provide real-time updates to teams and participants.

7.6 Team Rosters

- For **small-sided competition**, each team roster must consist of a **minimum of five (5)** and a **maximum of thirteen (13) players** at the time of submission.
- All teams must submit their **final named roster** to the Host Organisers or Tournament Committee **no later than twelve (12) hours prior to the start** of the tournament.

8 Match Rules

8.1 General Rules

Unless otherwise specified, all matches will be played in accordance with the **IFAB Laws of the Game**, with the following **tournament-specific modifications** permitted where necessary to accommodate format, venue, or schedule:

Modifications may include (but are not limited to):

- **Field dimensions, markings, and distances**
- **Ball size**
- **Number of players** on the field, substitutes, and bench limits
- **Goal size**
- **Referee and assistant referee structure**
- **Match duration**, including the use of **stoppage time**
- **Application or omission of the offside rule**
- **Permission or restriction of slide tackles**
- **Free kick procedures**
- **Any other adjustments required to ensure smooth tournament or league play**

8.2 Dimensions guidance but can differ on tournament

8.2.1 7 v 7 Field

- Penalty Arc or Penalty Area and centre circle may be optional.
- If no penalty spot, penalties are taken from centre of Penalty area on the line.

Version 1



Version 2



Law Amendments – SIN CITY Classic Specific Amendments

8.3 Specific Rules

7-a-side Football Open & Flinta only

- **Game Duration –**
 - Round-Robin Games: 17 Minutes (No Half Time)
 - Playoff Games: 17 minutes (No Half Time)
 - Final Game: 17 Minutes (No Half Time)
- **Kick Off** – The away team will kick off first.
- **Substitutions:** Unlimited, allowed during gameplay, stoppages or at referee discretion but the player leaving the field must have left before another player enters.
- Boarding which **ENDANGERS** the Opponent will be treated as violent conduct and a red card will be issued.
- **Players are not permitted to hold onto the barriers/wall to shield the ball and should be penalised by the referee for holding and an indirect free kick awarded.**
- **Deliberate Slide tackles are not permitted.** An indirect free kick will be awarded where the slide tackle is **DELIBERATE**. (The goalkeeper may slide hands first in an attempt to save the ball).
- **Discipline & Sanctions** – Blue cards and time penalties (Sin Bins) are not in operation. The tournament is operating with IFAB rules of yellow and red cards. (2 yellow cards = Red Card)
- **Penalties** – **The player taking a penalty kick is permitted no more than two steps in the run-up.** Any feinting that results in a complete stop after the run-up has commenced shall be sanctioned in accordance with IFAB Law 14.
- **Result Required** - For matches requiring a result, (there is no extra time and penalty kicks will be taken from the spot: – Each team takes 3 penalty kicks before proceeding to sudden death if needed.-Only players who are **on the field at the final whistle** may take part in the penalty shootout.
To ensure prompt execution due to tournament time constraints, **team managers/captains should prepare a penalty takers in advance** however this can be changed at the final whistle.

- Goalkeepers – Goalkeepers are not permitted to kick the ball from their hands at any time (Fly Kicks). They may place the ball on the floor to kick, or release with their hands with an underarm or overarm release. **(Bouncing and kicking is not permitted)**
- The goalkeeper is not allowed to pick up the ball with their hands if it was deliberately kicked to them by a teammate. (Back pass)
- All restarts (from the goalkeeper, free kicks, penalties, kick-ins and corner kicks) must be taken within five (5) seconds of the ball being correctly placed on the field of play, with all opponents at least three (3) yards from the ball. The five-second count shall not begin until opponents have retreated the required distance and are not interfering with the restart. Any player who fails to retreat three (3) yards, blocks the ball, or otherwise delays the restart may be cautioned. The referee shall indicate the countdown by verbally signalling from five seconds and by using a visible hand signal.
- **Free Kicks** – All free kicks are indirect (except a penalty kick), and opponents must be 3 yards from the kick. (More than two players in a defensive wall, the opposing team must remain 1 yard (approximately an arm's length from the defensive wall, until the ball is played).
- Any foul which requires an indirect free kick restart within the attacking 3rd *between the attacking/defensive line and the goal* (not including a kick in, corner or penalty kick) will be taken to the nearest attacking/defensive line. If no line they are taken from the spot where the incident occurred.

BALL HITTING NETTING

- If the ball CLEARLY hits the side netting (which is clear and obvious), the ball is placed parallel on the kick in line below the net where it touched the net. **A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick in.**
- If the ball CLEARLY touches the top netting (which is clear and obvious), the ball is placed on the **NEAREST** attacking/defensive or central line. **A goal cannot be scored directly from this restart.**

ADDITIONAL TIME / INJURIES

(Effective from 2026 – introduced due to repeated inappropriate and unsporting behaviour)

1. This procedure applies **only** where:
 - the referee **stops the match clock due to a player injury**, and
 - the referee considers the stoppage has created a **time-management or delay advantage**, and there has been no immediate substitution of the injured player.
2. **Player Removal**
The injured player must **leave the field of play immediately**.
3. **Substitution**

- The team **may make an immediate substitution** and continue with the full number of players.
 - The temporary removal applies **to the player only**, not the team.
4. **Removal Duration**
- If the clock is stopped **before 9:00 minutes**, the removed player is ineligible to participate for **9 minutes of playing time**.
 - If the clock is stopped **at or after 9:00 minutes**, the player is ineligible for **the remainder of the match**.
5. **Timekeeping**
- The match official off field records the time the player leaves the field.
 - The removal period begins from the **next whole minute**.
 - The referee or designated official controls the timing.
6. **Eligibility to Return**
- Once the removal period has expired, the player becomes **eligible to be used again as a substitute**, subject to:
 - remaining match time, and
 - normal substitution procedures.
 - If the injury occurs in the second and a result is required to be decided by kicks from the penalty mark, the injured player will not be eligible to participate, as only players on the field of play at the final whistle may take part in the penalty shoot-out.

Dealing with Discrimination

Discrimination of any kind has no place in football. If you witness or are made aware of a discriminatory incident during or after a match, follow the appropriate steps outlined below.

1. If ANY Match Official Witnesses or Hear a Discriminatory Incident During the Match

Whether the discrimination comes from a player or someone in the technical area:

- The referee must Stop play immediately.
- Send off the offending individual in accordance with Law 12.
- Record full details before restarting play:
- Name of the individual
- Nature of the offence and exact wording or action
- Match minute
- Your position on the field
- Any other relevant details or context

Inform both teams (players and management) that a full report has been made and will be submitted post-match.

2. If a Discriminatory Incident is Reported to You (But Not Witnessed by any match official)

If a player or official reports a discriminatory incident that no match official directly witnessed:

Stop play immediately.

- Record full details before restarting play:
- Name of the alleged offender
- Nature of the reported offence
- Match minute
- Who reported it, and where you were
- Any other relevant information

Inform both teams that the incident has been reported, a comprehensive note has been taken, and a post-match report will be submitted.

3. If Discrimination is Heard or Witnessed from Spectators

- Stop play immediately.
- Inform the host club/organiser so they can take action, if the individual can be identified.
- Record full details before restarting play:
- What was said or done
- Match minute
- Your position at the time
- Any other relevant information

Advise both teams that the incident has been reported and will be included in the post-match report.

4. If an Allegation is Made *After* the Match

If a discriminatory incident is reported to you after the game has concluded:

- Make detailed notes before leaving the venue:
- Exact wording and timing
- Names of individuals involved or present
- Description of the conversation(s)
- Keep your notes securely – do not discard them.
- Submit an extraordinary match report to the relevant body.
- Inform your referee appointments officer immediately.
- Do not speak to the media or comment publicly on the matter

Referee and Other Match Official Signals



Penalty kick



Advantage (1)



Advantage (2)



Indirect free kick



Direct free kick



Corner kick



Goal kick



**Red and
yellow card**



Countdown for the last five seconds

8.4 Player Equipment

All player equipment must comply with the **IFAB Laws of the Game**, as well as the specific requirements outlined below:

8.4.1 Team Equipment

- All players must wear **matching shirts** and where possible **Matching shorts and socks**.
- Shin guards are **considered mandatory** for all players.
*If they are not wearing shin guards, they do so **at their own risk**. In the event of an injury, **insurance coverage may be denied** if the player was not wearing shin guards at the time of the incident.*
- Players must wear **appropriate footwear** for the playing surface; **metal spikes/Blades are strictly prohibited**.
- **Goalkeepers** must wear kit colours that clearly distinguish them from both teams' outfield players and the referees.
- Any undershirts or undershorts must match the **predominant colour** of the respective team's shirt sleeves or shorts, where possible.

8.4.2 Kit Clashes and Home Team Responsibility

- In the event of a kit colour conflict, the team listed first on the match schedule shall be designated the **"Home" team** and is responsible for changing shirts or wearing bibs.

8.4.3 Prohibited Equipment

- Players **ARE NOT** permitted to wear any **equipment or object** that could pose a danger to themselves or others. This includes, but is not limited to, any type of watches (apple watch, smart watch, fit bit), any jewellery e.g. necklace, bracelets or in ear/nose/face piercings, rings rigid casts, or accessories deemed unsafe. In exceptional circumstances where a player can clearly demonstrate to the tournament organisers before the

tournament starts that a flat ring cannot be removed, they will be permitted to tape this, and this will be recorded.

9 Discipline and Protest

9.1 Yellow and Red Cards

9.1.1 Yellow Cards

A person receiving three (3) individual Yellow Cards during the tournament shall be suspended for the following match. This does not include a player who receives two yellow cards in one game resulting in a red card. This will be reset for teams who reach the final stage.

9.1.2 Red Cards (Dismissal)

a. Straight Red Card – Send Off Offences

A player or individual who receives a direct red card for a “send-off offence” shall:

- Be dismissed from the remainder of the match
- **Serve a minimum one (1) match suspension, effective for their next scheduled game including any quarter, semi or final game.**

b. Review of Red Card Offences

All red card offences are subject to post-match review by the Tournament Disciplinary Panel. Additional disciplinary action may be applied for red cards issued due to:

- **Violent conduct**
- **Serious foul play**
- **Discriminatory, insulting, or abusive language or gestures**

c. Double Yellow Card Dismissal

If a player receives **two cautions (yellow cards)** in the same match, they shall:

- Be shown a red card and dismissed for the remainder of the match

- Serve a **minimum one (1) match suspension**, effective for their next scheduled game including any quarter, semi or final game.

9.1.3 Conduct Following Dismissal

All players or individuals dismissed from a match must immediately:

- Leave the field of play
 - Refrain from returning to the technical area for the remainder of the match
 - Move to a designated non-field area, such as the changing rooms or spectator stands
- This requirement applies to **all matches**, regardless of tournament phase (e.g. group stage, knockout, final).

9.2 Discipline Committee & Additional Penalties

9.2.1 Disciplinary Action Following Red Cards

The Tournament Discipline Committee reserves the right to increase the standard sanction associated with a red card offence if circumstances warrant.

Any player, coach, team official, or associated individual may be required to attend a disciplinary hearing or protest panel if requested by the Tournament Committee or IGLFA Disciplinary Board.

9.2.2 Post-Tournament Sanctions

The IGLFA Disciplinary Board may impose further sanctions, including suspensions from future IGLFA-sanctioned tournaments, following a post-event investigation.

Sanctions may apply to the individual(s), team(s), or club(s) involved. The outcomes of such disciplinary actions will be communicated to other IGLFA tournament organisers to enforce cross-event eligibility restrictions as appropriate.

9.2.3 Violent Conduct & Abusive Behaviour

If a dismissal relates to **violent conduct** or the use of **offensive, insulting, or abusive language/actions**, the Discipline Committee will review the match officials' reports and consider the following sanctions, including but not limited to:

- Minimum one (1) match suspension
- Multi-match suspension
- Immediate suspension from all further participation and attendance for the duration of the tournament

A post-tournament review will be undertaken by the IGLFA Disciplinary Board to determine whether any further sanctions should be applied.

9.2.4 Misconduct Involving Match Officials

Misconduct toward match officials may occur before, during, or after a match—including during travel to or from the venue—and will be treated with utmost seriousness.

Sanctions apply equally to players, coaches, team officials, spectators, or any associated individuals.

Definition of “Match Official” includes:

- Referees, Assistant Referees, Fourth Officials, Reserve Referees, and any other persons duly appointed to officiate
- Non-licensed individuals temporarily serving in an emergency officiating role
- Tournament staff or volunteers acting in an official capacity

a. Referee Assault

An **intentional act of physical violence** toward a match official constitutes referee assault. This includes but is not limited to:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, or head-butting
- Grabbing or bodily charging into a referee
- Throwing or kicking objects at the referee
- Damaging a referee’s personal property (e.g., uniform, vehicle, equipment)

b. Referee Abuse

Referee abuse involves **verbal or physical actions that do not result in physical contact** but imply or threaten harm.

This includes:

- Threatening or abusive language directed at a match official
- Spitting **towards** (but not on) an official
- Throwing liquids or beverages that land on the official or their property

c. Procedure for Reporting Assault and Abuse

Referees shall submit a written report of the alleged assault or abuse, or both, the same day of the incident (unless there is a valid reason for later reporting) to the Tournament Director and Head of Referees. When an allegation of assault or abuse is verified by the Tournament Director, the person is automatically suspended from IGLFA until the hearing on the assault.

9.3 Penalties and Suspensions

9.3.1 Referee Assault – Mandatory Suspensions

Any individual found guilty of **referee assault** shall receive a mandatory suspension, with minimum periods applied based on the severity of the act and the age of the match official. These sanctions begin from the date of the offence:

- **Minor or incidental physical contact** (e.g. slight touching of the referee, their uniform, or personal property):
Minimum suspension: 3 months

- **Standard physical assault** (e.g. deliberate bodily contact without serious injury):
Minimum suspension: 6 months
- **Assault on a youth referee (17 years of age or younger) by an adult:**
Minimum suspension: 3 years
- **Assault resulting in serious injury** (e.g. broken bones, concussion, or requiring medical attention):
Minimum suspension: 5 years

Note: The IGLFA Disciplinary Committee cannot reduce these minimum periods but may extend them if the circumstances warrant greater disciplinary action.

9.3.2 Referee Abuse – Minimum Suspensions

Referee abuse involves non-physical conduct that threatens or implies harm, including verbal aggression or intimidation.

- **Minimum suspension for referee abuse:**
Three (3) scheduled matches within the same competition or an equivalent time-based suspension.

The IGLFA Disciplinary Committee reserves the right to apply longer suspensions in cases of repeated offences, group misconduct, or serious threats.

The IGLFA will notify the relevant football association of the individual's conduct.

9.4 Protests and Appeals

9.4.1 Grounds for Protests

Protests will only be considered if they concern one of the following:

- **A breach of official tournament rules**

Protests that fall outside of these parameters will not be considered.

9.4.2 Submission Procedure

All protests and appeals must be submitted as an email to the **Tournament Host Committee** (email address: sincitysoccerclassic@gmail.com) within **30 minutes** of the conclusion of the match in question.

10 Match Officials

10.1 System of Officiating

All matches must be officiated by qualified referees.

- *Small-sided games* (e.g., 7-a-side, 5-a-side) shall be officiated by a minimum of two (2) referees on the field. A third referee will be appointed to record goals, discipline, any rule infringements and time management.

10.2 Referee Qualifications

All referees must be currently registered and trained through a FIFA-recognised national Referee Association or equivalent international governing body.

10.3 Referee Evaluation

The IGLFA Referee Director (or their appointed designee) shall conduct referee assessments prior to match appointments. Evaluation systems and criteria will be determined by the IGLFA and Host Committee, based on experience, performance, and tournament needs.

10.4 Referee Reimbursement

Referees will receive fair and consistent reimbursement for their services, which may include:

- Match fees or a daily tournament rate (at the discretion of the Tournament Committee)
- IGLFA-affiliated and local referees shall be treated equitably in all compensation matters, except where logistical costs (such as housing) differ due to distance.

10.5 Referee Assignment

Match assignments are the sole responsibility of the IGLFA Referee Coordinator and the Host Tournament Referee Coordinator. Assignments will be made based on availability, competency, neutrality, and tournament logistics.

10.6 Referee Equipment

Match officials are permitted to use Electronic Communications System, Vanishing Spray and Beeper Flags. Body worn cameras are permitted but must be agreed by the IGLFA Referee Director and Tournament Organiser.

10.7 Pre-tournament meetings

Meetings of Referees and Coaches must take place prior to the tournament. Suitable premises for these meetings must be provided by the Host Committee. These may also include virtual meetings.

APPENDIX and POLICIES from IGLFA

The below Appendix/policies are an aid for the tournament organisers, but it is the tournaments responsibility to ensure that they have policies and insurance covering Health & Safety, Medical coverage and emergency procedures for weather conditions (flooding, lightning, extreme heat), terrorism activity.

Transgender and Non-Binary Player Inclusion Policy

Effective 2025 – Aligned with IGLFA’s commitment to equity, dignity, and participation

IGLFA is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all players, including transgender, non-binary, and gender-diverse participants. Every individual has the right to participate in a manner consistent with their gender identity without unnecessary barriers or scrutiny.

1. Self-Identification as the Basis for Participation

- All players may register and participate in accordance with their self-identified gender.
- No player is required to provide medical, legal, or governmental documentation of their gender identity.
- A person’s self-identification is sufficient for eligibility to play on the team that aligns with their gender.

2. Non-Binary and Gender-Diverse Players

- IGLFA recognises that not all individuals identify within a male/female binary.
- Where team structures or divisions allow, IGLFA supports the inclusion of non-binary or gender-diverse players in open or mixed-gender teams.
- Where teams are gendered (e.g., men’s or women’s competitions), non-binary players may register for the team that most closely aligns with their identity and comfort level.

3. Privacy and Respect

- All players, including those who are transgender or non-binary, have the right to privacy and dignity.
- Match officials, coaches, and organizers must treat any information about a player’s gender identity as confidential.
- It is not appropriate to question or challenge a player’s identity or appearance.

4. Allegations and Eligibility Concerns

In the rare instance that a concern is raised regarding a player’s eligibility:

- The matter will be addressed discreetly, sensitively, and with a presumption of good faith.
- Players may, if they choose, submit any documentation they feel comfortable sharing to support their registration, but this is not required.
- A player’s decision not to provide documentation shall not, in itself, constitute grounds for exclusion, ineligibility, or disciplinary action.
- The aim is always to ensure inclusion, fairness, and safety — not to exclude or shame.

5. Final Review Process

Eligibility concerns will be reviewed by a designated IGLFA Inclusion Panel, comprising individuals trained in equality, diversity, and safeguarding:

- The panel will engage with the player where appropriate and will prioritize affirming participation.
- Final decisions will be guided by the principles of fairness, inclusion, and respect — not arbitrary or medicalised criteria.

6. Future Development

IGLFA is committed to continuous learning and consultation with LGBTQ+ athletes and advocacy groups. This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with global best practices and the lived experiences of our players.

BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGEN (BLOOD)

Dealing with a bloody wound:

- If bleeding occurs where other participants may be exposed to blood, the individual's participation must be interrupted until the bleeding has been stopped. The wound must be cleansed with antiseptic and securely covered.
- All clothing soiled with blood should be replaced prior to the athlete resuming training or competition. Clothing soiled with blood and other body fluids must be washed in hot, soapy water.
- If an athlete leaves the field, has his injury treated and covered and wishes to re-enter the match in another, differently numbered jersey that replaces a blood-stained jersey, they may re-enter only after the Referee has been advised of the change of number.
- All equipment and surfaces contaminated with blood and other body fluids should be cleaned with a solution of one-part household bleach to nine parts water. This solution should be prepared fresh daily. This is particularly important on the artificial turf of indoor arenas.

While cleaning blood or other body fluid spills, the following must be done:

- Wear waterproof gloves.
- Wipe up fluids with paper towels or disposable cloths.
- Disinfect the area as described in the above.
- Place all soiled waste in a plastic bag for disposal.
- Remove gloves and wash hands with soap and water.
- Other wounds must be reviewed by medical personnel, including abrasions and all skin lesions and rashes on athletes, coaches and officials. All wounds, skin lesions and rashes must be confirmed as non-infectious and be securely covered prior to the athlete starting or continuing participation.

*Note – The facility is normally responsible for blood clean-up. Their staff have been properly trained and should have the necessary equipment/solution to do so. Local, regional, and nationwide health guidelines in force at the location of the tournament will be followed.

AIRBORNE PATHOGEN

In the event that the tournament has occurred in an area where airborne pathogens place participants at potential risk for illness, the following must be done:

- Local, regional, and nationwide guidelines from appropriate healthcare authorities for both indoor and outdoor events will be followed.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be worn per those guidelines both on and off the field of play as indicated.
- Vaccination proof may be required to play in a tournament, guidelines for validating vaccination records of the individual player will be the responsibility of the Tournament Director or their designate. The utmost of discretion of private health information will be maintained, including the removal of proof of vaccination and other private health information in a timely manner once verified.
- Vaccination exemptions are subject to Tournament Director approval, or their designate, and will require written proof from a medical professional or religious representative. The decision to allow or deny participation in the tournament is at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director, and their decision is final. Testing for airborne pathogens may also be required should an exemption be granted, at the discretion of the Tournament Director and based on guidelines from health authorities.
- Testing for airborne pathogens may be required for participation in the Tournament, per local, regional, and nationwide directives. The Tournament Director will develop a process for this as needed.

CONCUSSION

CONCUSSION GUIDELINES PLAYERS 'HEALTH AND SAFETY FIRST

SUMMARY

- A concussion is a brain injury.
- All concussions should be regarded as potentially serious.
- Most concussions recover completely with correct management.
- Incorrect management of a concussion can lead to further injury.
- Concussions should be managed according to current guidelines.
- Anyone with any concussion symptoms following an injury must be immediately removed from playing or training and must not return to playing, or training for soccer in the same day.
- Concussions are to be diagnosed and managed by health care professionals working within their scope of practice and expertise.
- Concussions are managed by physical and brain rest until symptoms resolve. Return to education or work must take priority over return to playing soccer.
- Concussion symptoms must have completely resolved, and medical clearance must be received before resuming training for or playing soccer.
- A progressive exercise program that re-introduces an individual to training for, and ultimately playing soccer is recommended following concussion recovery.
- The recurrence of concussion symptoms during a progressive exercise program requires removal from training or playing and reassessment by health care professionals.

CONCUSSION GUIDELINES THE FINE PRINT

These guidelines are intended to guide those managing concussion in soccer at all levels. Professional and National level players typically have access to an enhanced level of medical care, which means that their concussion and their return to play can be managed in a more closely monitored way.

These guidelines are based on current evidence and examples of best practice taken from soccer organizations around the world and other sports, including the Football Association, the Scottish FA, World Rugby, and the Canadian Concussion Collaborative.

These guidelines have been reviewed and approved by the Canada Soccer Sports Medicine Committee. They are consistent with the current Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport issued by the Fourth International Conference on Concussion in Sport, Zurich 2012.

While these guidelines aim to reflect 'best practice', it must be recognized that there is a current lack of evidence with respect to their effectiveness in preventing long-term harm. The Canada

RESPOND - WE ALL NEED TO PLAY A PART IN THE RECOGNITION AND MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSION

As Canadians, we have a heightened awareness of concussions, related to increased media coverage of this brain injury with its range of outcomes, incidents involving high profile athletes with concussion, and increasing understanding of the consequences of repetitive brain trauma, primarily within professional sports.

WHAT IS A “CONCUSSION”?

Concussion is an injury to the brain resulting in a disturbance of brain function involving thinking and behaviour.

WHAT CAUSES CONCUSSION?

Concussion can be caused by a direct blow to the head or an impact to the body causing rapid movement of the head and movement of the brain within the skull.

ONSET OF SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of concussion typically appear immediately but may evolve within the first 24-48 hours.

WHO IS AT RISK?

All our sport’s participants (players, but also team staff and officials).

Some soccer participants are at increased risk of concussion:

- Children and adolescents (18 years and under) are more susceptible to brain injury, take longer to recover, and are susceptible to rare dangerous brain complications, which may include death.
- Female soccer players have higher rates of concussion.
- Participants with previous concussion are at increased risk of further concussions - which may take longer to recover.

WHAT ARE THE DANGERS OF BRAIN INJURY?

Failure to recognize and report concussive symptoms or returning to activity with ongoing concussion symptoms set the stage for:

1. Cumulative concussive injury
2. ‘Second Impact Syndrome’

Second impact syndrome is a rare occurrence. An athlete sustains a brain injury and while still experiencing symptoms (not fully recovered), sustains a second brain injury, which is associated with brain swelling and permanent brain injury or death. Brain swelling may also occur without previous trauma.

Recurrent brain injury is currently implicated in the development of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy. Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) is a progressive degenerative brain

disease seen in people with a history of brain trauma. For athletes, the brain trauma has been repetitive. Originally described in deceased boxers, it now has been recognized in many sports. Symptoms include difficulty thinking, explosive and aggressive behaviour, mood disorder (depression), and movement disorder (Parkinsonism).

RECOGNIZE - LEARN THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION SO YOU UNDERSTAND WHEN A SOCCER PLAYER MIGHT HAVE A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION.

Everyone involved in the match (including side-line staff, coaches, players, parents and guardians of children and adolescents) should be aware of the signs, symptoms, and dangers of concussion. If any of the following signs or symptoms are present following an injury the player should be suspected of having concussion and immediately removed from play or training.

“If in doubt, sit them out.”

“It is better to miss one match than the whole season.”

VISIBLE CLUES OF CONCUSSION – WHAT YOU MAY SEE:

- Any one or more of the following visual clues can indicate a concussion:
- Dazed, blank or vacant look
- Lying motionless on ground / slow to get up
- Loss of consciousness – confirmed or suspected
- Unsteady on feet or balance problems or falling over or poor coordination
- Loss of consciousness or responsiveness
- Confused or not aware of play or events
- Grabbing, clutching, or shaking of the head
- Seizure
- More emotional or irritable than normal for that person
- Injury event that could have caused a concussion

SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION - WHAT YOU MAY BE TOLD BY AN INJURED PLAYER:

- The presence of any one or more of the following symptoms may suggest a concussion:
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Mental clouding, confusion, or feeling slowed down
- Trouble seeing
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fatigue
- Drowsiness or feeling like “in a fog” or difficulty concentrating
- “Pressure in head”
- Sensitivity to light or noise

QUESTIONS TO ASK AN ADULT OR ADOLESCENT PLAYER:

Failure to answer any of these questions correctly is an indication of a suspected concussion.

“What field are we at today?”

“Which half is it now?”

“Who scored last in this match?”

“What team did you play last?”

“Did your team win your last match?”

Failure to answer any of these questions correctly is an indication of a suspected concussion.

REMOVE - IF A SOCCER PLAYER HAS A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION, HE OR SHE MUST BE REMOVED FROM ACTIVITY IMMEDIATELY.

Team-mates, side-line staff, coaches, players or parents and guardians who suspect that a player may have concussion MUST work together to ensure that the player is removed from play in a safe manner.

If a neck injury is suspected the player should only be removed by emergency healthcare professionals with appropriate spinal care training. Call 911. Activate your emergency action plan.

More severe forms of brain injury may be mistaken for concussion. If ANY of the following are observed or reported within 48 hours of an injury, then the player should be transported for urgent medical assessment at the nearest hospital (symptoms below). Call 911. Activate your emergency action plan.

- Severe neck pain
- Deteriorating consciousness (drowsier)
- Increasing confusion or irritability
- Severe or increasing headache
- Repeated vomiting
- Unusual behaviour change (persistent irritability in younger children; increased agitation in teens) Seizure
- Double vision
- Weakness or tingling / burning in arms or legs

ANYONE WITH A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION SHOULD NOT:

- be left alone in the first 24 hours
- consume alcohol in the first 24 hours, and thereafter should avoid alcohol until free of all concussion symptoms
- drive a motor vehicle and should not return to driving until provided with medical or healthcare professional clearance

Once safely removed from play the player must not be returned to activity that day.

REFER - ONCE REMOVED FROM PLAY, THE PLAYER SHOULD BE REFERRED TO A QUALIFIED HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL WITH TRAINING IN THE EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSIONS.

Concussion or more severe forms of brain injury are to be diagnosed by health care professionals within their scope of practice and expertise.

In all cases of suspected concussion, it is recommended that the player be referred to a medical or healthcare professional for diagnosis and management advice, even if the symptoms resolve.

REPORT – COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PLAYERS, PARENTS, TEAM STAFF, AND THEIR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IS VITAL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE PLAYER.

For adolescents with suspected concussion who have not been directly transferred for medical management, coaches must communicate their concerns directly with the parents or guardians.

Players, parents, and guardians must disclose the nature of, and status of any active injuries to coaches and team staff.

REST AND RECOVER – REST IS THE CORNERSTONE OF CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT. The management of a concussion involves physical and brain rest until symptoms resolve as recommended by your health care provider.

In conjunction with your school and educational professionals and health care provider, recommendations will be made about whether it is appropriate to take time away from school, or whether returning to school should be done in a graded fashion, this is called “return to learn”. Your health care provider will also make recommendations about whether it is appropriate to take time away from work, or whether returning to work should be done in a graded fashion, this is called “return to work”.

RETURN TO SOCCER

For safe return to soccer following a concussion, the athlete must:

- be symptom-free, for adolescents a further period of up to 10 days of asymptomatic rest may be recommended
- be off treatments that may mask concussion symptoms (i.e. headache or sleep medication)
- be cleared in writing by a qualified healthcare professional trained in evaluating and treating concussions
- adults: have returned to normal education or work, and students: must have returned to school or full studies
- have completed a graduated return to play protocol without recurrence of symptoms

If symptoms recur during the graduated return to play protocol, the player must be immediately removed from playing or training and be reassessed by their healthcare practitioner promptly.

A player with an unusual presentation or prolonged recovery or a history of multiple recurrent concussions, should be assessed and managed by a healthcare provider with experience in sports-related concussions working within a multidisciplinary team.

ENHANCED CARE SETTING

In some circumstances (such as Professional Clubs or National teams) there may be an enhanced level of medical care available which allows closer supervision of an adult player’s care (>18 years of age). In these instances, a shorter time frame for the graduated return to play may be possible, but only under strict supervision by the appropriate medical personnel as part of a structured concussion management program.

Please use the following tools on the following pages or easy reference:

- **Graduated Return to Play Protocol**
- **Concussion Recognition Tool**

GRADUATED RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

Start Stage 1 ONLY if free of concussive symptoms, off medications for concussive symptoms, back to work and/or school, and cleared by a qualified healthcare professional. Stages 1-4 take a minimum of 24 hours in adults, 48 hours in those aged 18 and under.

	Exercise Allowed	% Max Heart Rate	Duration	Objective
Rest and recover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None - "Rest the body, Rest the brain" 	No training	Until symptoms clear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recovery - Symptom free
Stage 1 Light Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walking, light jogging, swimming, stationary cycling or equivalent - No football, resistance training, weightlifting, jumping or hard running 	<70%	<15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase heart rate
Stage 2 Football Specific Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simple movement activities i.e.: running drills - Limit body and head movement - NO head impact activities - NO heading 	<80%	<45 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add movement
Stage 3 Non- Contact Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progression to more complex training activities - with increased intensity - co-ordination and attention e.g. passing, change of direction, shooting, small-sided match - May start resistance training - NO head impact activities including NO heading - goalkeeping activities should avoid diving and any risk of the head being hit by a ball 	<90%	<60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exercise, coordination and skills/tactics
Stage 4 Full Contact Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Normal training activities i.e. tackling, heading, diving saves 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff
Stage 5 Match Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Player Rehabilitated 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Return to match play

Pocket CONCUSSION RECOGNITION TOOL™

To help identify concussion in children, youth and adults



RECOGNIZE & REMOVE

Concussion should be suspected **if one or more** of the following visible clues, signs, symptoms or errors in memory questions are present.

1. Visible clues of suspected concussion

Any one or more of the following visual clues can indicate a possible concussion:

Loss of consciousness or responsiveness

Lying motionless on ground/Slow to get up

Unsteady on feet / Balance problems or falling over/Incoordination

Grabbing/Clutching of head

Dazed, blank or vacant look

Confused/Not aware of plays or events

2. Signs and symptoms of suspected concussion

Presence of any one or more of the following signs & symptoms may suggest a concussion:

- Loss of consciousness
- Seizure or convulsion
- Balance problems
- Nausea or vomiting
- Drowsiness
- More emotional
- Irritability
- Sadness
- Fatigue or low energy
- Nervous or anxious
- "Don't feel right"
- Difficulty remembering

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Feeling slowed down
- "Pressure in head"
- Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Amnesia
- Feeling like "in a fog"
- Neck Pain
- Sensitivity to noise
- Difficulty concentrating

3. Memory function

Failure to answer any of these questions correctly may suggest a concussion.

"What venue are we at today?"

"Which half is it now?"

"Who scored last in this game?"

"What team did you play last week/game?"

"Did your team win the last game?"

Any athlete with a suspected concussion should be IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM PLAY, and should not be returned to activity until they are assessed medically. Athletes with a suspected concussion should not be left alone and should not drive a motor vehicle.

It is recommended that, in all cases of suspected concussion, the player is referred to a medical professional for diagnosis and guidance as well as return to play decisions, even if the symptoms resolve.

RED FLAGS

If ANY of the following are reported then the player should be safely and immediately removed from the field. If no qualified medical professional is available, consider transporting by ambulance for urgent medical assessment:

- Athlete complains of neck pain
- Increasing confusion or irritability
- Repeated vomiting
- Seizure or convulsion
- Weakness or tingling/burning in arms or legs
- Deteriorating conscious state
- Severe or increasing headache
- Unusual behaviour change
- Double vision

Remember:

- In all cases, the basic principles of first aid (danger, response, airway, breathing, circulation) should be followed.
- Do not attempt to move the player (other than required for airway support) unless trained to do so
- Do not remove helmet (if present) unless trained to do so.

from McCrory et al., Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport. Br J Sports Med 47 (5), 2013

