

I. Referee Guidelines

COMPETITION RULES & REGULATIONS

GENERAL

Unless otherwise provided in these Regulations, all Girls Academy competitions shall be played in accordance with the youth association and league modifications listed below and FIFA Laws of the Game in force at the time of competition as provided by the International Football Association Board.

Member clubs are required to comply with these regulations, and in addition, member clubs are encouraged to report pertinent situations to the league staff, which appear to be in non-compliance with the league requirements. Reporting non-compliance on the part of other clubs should not be viewed as a negative, but rather as a positive attempt to maintain consistent standards that ensure professionalism and fairness, both on and off the field.

All member clubs are required to adhere to the league requirements. The board of directors reserve the right to decide how to enforce these requirements. Should a member club be found in violation of any of the requirements outlined in this document, their standing as a member club may be jeopardized. The penalties vary based on the type and frequency of the infraction and may result in denied participation in specific competitions and programming.

CONDUCT

Each member club shall be responsible for the conduct of its players, representatives and members attending any home fixture as related to all aspects of the league and agree to abide by the FIFA Code of Conduct.

REFEREES

Each member club is expected to seek the best referees in their geographic area. Regional Referees or higher are preferred when available. All Referees shall be registered with US Soccer and in good standing. It is the responsibility of each host club to collaborate with their local referee assignor for match assignments. The host club shall be responsible for all referee related payment. Fees schedule is listed in the referee guidelines section of the frameworks.

It is the expectation for all GA matches to have 3 referees for each match. If an emergency occurs and a 3rd official is rendered unavailable or cannot continue a match, the GA home club must immediately notify the visiting club and GA Competitions Manager via email (admin@girlsacademyleague.com) of the circumstances, and a 'club linesperson' may be utilized for the match. When using a 'club linesperson' they are ONLY responsible for notifying the Center Referee when the ball goes out of bounds. They are not to indicate the direction of a throw-in. They are not to call fouls. They are to stay in line with the last defender but do not signal for offside. An approved certified referee that subs in and is in uniform will be compensated by the home club; a 'club linesperson' does not receive compensation.

REFEREE COMPENSATION

All costs of referees are the responsibility of the home club. If a neutral site is used, the designated home club shall pay unless it is pre-approved by the league that costs will be shared. Payment of appointed referees is up to the discretion of the home club. It is suggested that the home team pays the referees prior to the game upon arrival through the arbiter system or direct deposit centrally through USOfficials or other avenues. No payment of any type post-game. At Conference/National Events, the referee fees are included in event fees.

Age=Center/AR1/AR2/4th Official

U13-U15= \$85/\$55/\$55 + \$45 for a 4th**

U16-U19= \$95/\$65/\$65 + \$45 for a 4th**

**Note: 4th Officials are not required for Girls Academy matches.

EQUIPMENT

1. Uniforms

- a. Players, coaches and club officials are not allowed to display political, religious or personal messages in any language or form on their playing or team uniforms, equipment (including bags, beverage containers, medical bags, etc.) or body for the duration of official league games.
 - i. Head coverings for religious reasons are permitted.
 - ii. If warm-up jerseys are used, they must be uniform throughout the team and must be approved by the Commissioner in advance of competition day.
- b. Member clubs are required to have one light colored uniform and one dark uniform.
- c. Home team will be required to wear light colored uniforms and away team will be required to wear dark colored uniforms
 - i. Home teams will be responsible for changing in the event of a conflict. On a double fixture weekend, it is required for teams to coordinate uniform colors ahead of time for the entire weekend to avoid conflicts.
 - ii. The designation of light & dark requires that jersey and socks match
 - iii. The Girls Academy has no requirement that players wear light or white shorts

2. Goals, Nets, Corner Flags and Benches

- a. All goals must be properly anchored.
- b. A game will not start without proper equipment, including secured goals, properly lined fields, and corner flags.

ROSTERS

1. Game Roster Size

- a. For U13 through U19 games, only 18 players from the roster will be eligible to participate in each game, and these players must be placed on the Game Day Roster (showing players that will start and players eligible for substitution).
- b. The bench and technical area is reserved for players and a maximum of five (5) registered club staff members, not including a registered Health Care Professional (HCP) or Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC).

2. Match Cards

- a. The official game day roster must be provided on the match cards and shall be presented to the referee prior to the game and should also include team staff. All teams are responsible for verifying the accuracy of rosters provided on all Match Cards and signing a completed copy from the referee crew after the game.
- b. Only 4 staff will show up on the printed game card due to space. If more than 4 staff members are on the bench, each additional staff member must present their GA coach/manager card to the referee.
- c. The home team must enter the score, red and/or yellow cards as well as upload the game card within 24 hours in GotSport.
- d. NO WRITE-INS ALLOWED (a jersey number may be written in if necessary, but not a player).
- e. The GA Staff will update the rosters weekly on the website to reflect any suspensions, additions or drops, or other eligibility issues.

3. Eligible Player

- a. Players listed on the roster must meet the age requirement for their team, have paid the registration fee and have supplied proof of their age to the club staff in the form of a birth certificate or passport, waiver and must be properly registered and not be subject to suspension.
- b. All players must be registered to the club in the league system and approved by league staff in GotSport.
- c. league staff in GotSport.

4. Ineligible Player

- a. Players not listed on the roster, or any player listed on the roster but not eligible to play, due to reasons such as missing registration forms, awaiting international clearance, serving a league suspension or not on the official game day roster/match card shall be considered an ineligible player.

- b. Any member club using an ineligible player during any competition may be subject to a fine as determined by board of directors and/or a forfeit (by a 0-3 margin) of any game(s) in which the ineligible player participated.

5. GK Amendment to the Loan Player Rule

- a. The Amendment allows for an age eligible GK to be loaned to another team within the same member club, in the event of an injury.
 - i. A loaned GK can play in two games in a day and would need pre-approval from the league when the injury to the other goalkeeper occurs by email to the Director of Operations.
 - ii. Otherwise, all requests must be approved via email to the Director of Operations in advance of the game.
 - iii. Once approved, clubs must inform their opponent of the approval via email.

GUIDELINES FOR RESCHEDULES, POSTPONEMENTS AND GAME FORFEITURES

Following the mutually agreed upon postponement of a league game, the following mandatory items must be included in the communication for the reschedule to be accepted by league commissioner:

1. Documented communication between club directors stating the reason for postponement and mutual agreement to the postponement.
2. Documented agreement on the reschedule date, time, and locations of postponed fixtures/games must be agreed upon by both parties.
3. An email to the Competitions Manager including members of both clubs involved in a reschedule must be submitted by the host club for the rescheduled fixture and sent to the Competitions Manager within 7 days following the initial postponement.
4. The new game times must subsequently be entered into the official schedule/website.
5. Once approved by the Competitions Manager, in writing, the host club is required to communicate the new fixture/game times to appropriate game day officials (referees, trainers, cameraman, etc.).
6. Clubs not following the proper protocol for reschedules are subject to fines and loss of points.
7. Same-day weather cancellations (Acts of God, etc.) of league games will be considered postponed and the same expectations will apply.

Note: Same-day cancellations must be communicated to the Competitions Managers via email as soon as the decision has been made in real time.

A game will be determined as forfeited when one team does not show up for a mutually agreed upon fixture (date, time, and location) without proper documented notification* (via email) an

agreement with the other club or there is an instance when a team is found to have broken one of the league rules, policies or procedures.

*Notification to the Competitions Manager no later than 48 hours prior to the match. The instances of forfeiture include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of an ineligible player (no card, DOB, etc.)
2. Lack of official roster or game cards at the start of a game
3. Re-entry of substituted player in the same half of a game (no re-entry in the same half)

In cases of game forfeiture, the score shall be 3-0 in favor of the non-forfeiting team. Teams forfeiting games are at risk of being denied participation in the national playoffs, however the final determination of eligibility will be made by the board of directors.

All regular season conference matches must be completed prior to June 4, 2023, to ensure proper determination of postseason qualifiers for the Girls Academy National Playoffs/Showcase.

Cancellations of games not impacting the National Playoffs must be approved by and are at the discretion of the board of directors.

TECHNICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Game Length
 - a. All U13, U14 and U15 games will be two (2) 40-minute halves with 10-minute halftime
 - b. U16, U17 and U19 games will be two (2) 45-minute halves with a 10-minute halftime
2. Game Roster Size
 - a. For U13 through U19 games, only 18 players from the roster will be eligible to participate in each game, and these players must be placed on the Game Day Roster (showing players that will start and players eligible for substitution).
 - b. The bench and technical area is reserved for players and a maximum of five (5) registered club staff members, not including a registered Health Care Professional (HCP) or Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC).
3. Substitutions
 - a. The Girls Academy Substitution Sheet must be used for substitutions during all Girls Academy games.
 - i. Note: Halftime substitutions do not require the use of substitution sheet.
 - b. All games will have a maximum of seven (7) substitutes per half with no re-entry per half across five (5) opportunities, no more than three (3) opportunities per half.

- i. Halftime does not count as an opportunity.
- c. Substitutions are allowed at any stoppage.
- d. Overtime
 - i. Once a player is substituted in one period of overtime of any GA competition, then such player may not re-enter the game.
 - ii. The overtime periods shall permit a maximum of seven (7) substitutes total across both periods across three (3) moments.
 - 1. The stoppage between each period of overtime does not count as a moment.

4. Head Injury Substitution (Concussion Substitution)

- a. A player who suffers a potential head injury may be temporarily substituted for to be evaluated by a HCP.
- b. The Temporary Substitute may be any player who has not previously been substituted for in that half. If all players have been substituted for in that half, then a player may re-enter the match as the Temporary Substitute.
- c. This process will utilize a traffic light system.
 - i. **Green Light:** If the injured player is cleared to return, and returns to the match, she must replace the Temporary Substitute. The team will NOT be charged a Substitution or Moment.
 - ii. **Red Light:** If the injured player is not cleared to return, or is cleared, and opts not to return for her safety, the Temporary Substitution shall become permanent. Only a Substitution shall be charged. No moment shall be charged for a temporary substitution.
- d. No Remaining Substitutions
 - i. If the team does not have any remaining Substitutions, the Temporary Substitute will be permitted to remain in the match.
- e. Delays in Evaluation
 - i. If the injured player is delayed a clearance beyond the half/match, or the half / match ends during evaluation, the Temporary Substitute shall remain in the match, and shall be a recorded Substitution for that half.
- f. Case Examples (All cases relate to presumed head injuries. All circumstances are independent of each other. Presume all occur in different matches.)
 - i. Team A #1 is removed to be evaluated in the 8th minute of the match. She is cleared to return in the 15'.

1. A Temporary Substitution may occur in the 8th. Upon her clearance, she returns to the match, so there is no substitution charged.
- ii. Team A #2 is removed in 19' to be evaluated. #3 enters the match as a Temporary Substitution. She is not cleared pending further evaluation later in the day.
 1. #3 becomes a permanent Substitution in the first half, a Substitution is charged.
- iii. Team B #1 is removed in the 38' minute to be evaluated. #2 enters as a Temporary Substitution. At halftime, #1 is cleared. / Not cleared.
 1. In both circumstances, Team B is charged the first half Substitution as #2 ended the period in #1s absence.
- iv. Team A #4 is removed in the 30'. Team A has utilized all of its 7 Substitutions in this half. #5 enters as a Temporary Substitution. 5' later, #4 is not cleared to return.
 1. #5 may remain in the match.

5. Game Disciplinary

a. Red Cards - Players

i. Regular Season

1. Any player receiving a red card in a Non-Event GA Competition will be suspended for the remainder of that match. The player will also be suspended for the next day on which a Non-Event GA match is played by their club for their specific age group and/or any other age group.

a. Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the GA Commissioner.

ii. Events

1. Any player receiving a red card in a GA Event Competition (Regional, Champions League, Showcase, Playoffs) will be suspended for the remainder of that match. The player will also be suspended for the next match played by their club for their specific age group and/or any other age group in a GA Event Competition.

a. Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the GA Commissioner.

b. Red Cards - Coaches

i. Regular Season

1. Any approved GA coach receiving a red card in a Non-Event GA Competition will be suspended for the remainder of that match, as well as all other age groups competing that day. The coach will also be suspended for the next day on which that specific age group plays a Non-Event GA Competition.

a. Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the GA Commissioner.

b. Any coach receiving multiple red cards within the same season shall be reviewed for additional suspension or sanction by the GA Commissioner.

ii. Events

1. Any approved GA coach receiving a red card in a GA Event Competition (Regional, Champions League, Showcase, Playoffs) will be suspended for the remainder of that match, as well as all other age groups competing that day. The coach will also be suspended for the next day on which that specific age group plays a GA Event Competition.

a. Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the GA Commissioner.

b. Any coach receiving multiple red cards within the same event shall be reviewed for additional suspension or sanction by the GA Commissioner.

c. Yellow Card Accumulation

i. There shall be no yellow card accumulation policy for players or coaches in the GA.

d. Red Card Carryover

i. Red card suspensions, for the player and/or coach, carry over into the first league game of next GA season, if the red card is received on the final league game of the current season.

ii. Red card suspensions, for the player and/or coach, carry over into the first event game of the next GA season, if the red card is received on the final game of the team's last event in the current season.

iii. If a player and/or coach transfers to a different GA club, the red card will stay with the player and/or coach and carry over to the next season's first league game or next season's first event game.

iv. If the player and/or coach is no longer in the GA then the red card is wiped clean as there is no way to enforce.

e. Reporting

i. Referees will complete the [GA RED CARD REPORT](#) at the end of a game in which any dismissal has taken place. Dismissals include:

1. Player and/or coach red cards.
2. Any non-coaching staff member told to leave the technical area and/or field.
3. Any spectator told to leave the field.

ii. Club Directors are to immediately contact the Girls Academy Commissioner in the event of a significant disciplinary incident. (206-459-5456 & Commissioner@girlsacademyleague.com) This is including but not limited to:

1. Player and/or coach red card send-off for violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior.
2. Non-coaching staff member send-off for violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior.
3. Spectator send-off for violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior.
4. Violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior by any of the above parties prior to or after the match.

LAWS OF THE GAME, DISCIPLINARY MATTERS, DISPUTES, PROTESTS & APPEALS

1. Laws of the Game

a. General

- i. Unless otherwise provided in these Regulations, all games shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game in force at the time of the competition and as laid down by the International Football Association Board. In the case of any discrepancy in the interpretation of the Laws of the Game, the English version shall be authoritative.

b. Disciplinary Matters

- i. Disciplinary incidents are dealt with by the league commissioner and board of directors.
- ii. The players and members clubs participating in the Girls Academy agree to comply with the Laws of the Game, the USSF Bylaws and Policies, these Regulations and the Disciplinary Code. The Players, Coaches, Representatives and Clubs agree to comply with all further directives regarding the Girls Academy.

1. The Players and Coaches agree notably to:

- a. respect the spirit of fair play
- b. non-violence
- c. behave accordingly

d. refrain from illegal use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco

iii. Disputes

1. Parties shall try to resolve all disputes in connection with the Girls Academy by negotiation. In compliance with USSF Bylaw 707, member clubs, players and other officials may not take disputes to an ordinary court of law. If a decision is subject to appeal, it shall be submitted to the jurisdiction of the league commissioner.

iv. Protest & Appeals

1. Overview

- a. For the purpose of these regulations, protests are objections of any kind related to events or matters that have a direct effect on games, including, but not limited to, the eligibility of players, the state of the field, accessory game equipment, crowd behavior and stadium installations.

2. Time

- a. Unless otherwise stipulated in this article, protests shall be submitted in writing to the league commissioner and board of directors within 12 hours of the conclusion of the game in question and followed up immediately with a full written report, including a copy of the original protest, to be sent in writing to the Girls Academy; otherwise they will be disregarded.

3. Eligibility

- a. Protests regarding the eligibility of players for games shall be submitted in writing to the league commissioner no later than 24 hours after the game.

4. Field Conditions

- a. Protests regarding the state of the field, its surroundings, markings or accessory items (e.g., goals, flag posts or soccer balls) shall be made in writing to the referee before the start of the game by the coach or administrator lodging the protest.
- b. The league commissioner must also be notified of the protest prior to kick-off. If the field's playing surface becomes unplayable during a game, the referee shall consult the league commissioner and both parties shall have the joint right to determine whether to delay, postpone or cancel the game.

5. After a Game

- a. Protests against any incidents that occur during the course of a game shall be made to the league commissioner immediately following the completion of the game.

6. Referee's Decisions

- a. No protests may be made about the referee's decisions regarding facts connected with play, such decisions are final.

7. Frivolous Protests

- a. If an unfounded or irresponsible protest is lodged, the Girls Academy may dismiss the protest.

8. Game Fixing Policy

- a. The Girls Academy prohibits game fixing of any kind.
- b. Any member clubs that condone or contemplate game fixing will be subject to immediate dismissal from the program and may face additional sanctioning.

RISK MANAGEMENT

1. Overview

- a. The Girls Academy is committed to providing a safe environment for its members and participants, and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. Every member club and its personnel are responsible for protecting participants and ensuring their safety and well-being while involved in sponsored activities. The following guidelines of behavior and procedures have been adopted for member clubs, staff, volunteers and participants. All clubs, as well as parents, spectators and other invitees, are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines. Violation of these guidelines may be used as a basis for a club or its staff's suspension or other disciplinary action, or a staff's disqualification from registration.
 - i. Abuse of any kind is not permitted within the Girls Academy. Physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse or misconduct from players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents or spectators shall not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to such forms of abuse as: insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, physical or mental disability, nationality/ethnicity, sex or age.
 - ii. Physical and/or sexual abuse, including, but not limited to striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks,

indecent exposure and any form of sexual contact or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within the Girls Academy.

- iii. In addition, every member is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our members by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling or spectator.
- iv. The Girls Academy will respond quickly to all allegations of abuse within this organization. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly.

2. Conduct

- a. The Girls Academy promotes respect and good sportsmanship throughout the league and encourages qualities of mutual respect, courtesy and tolerance in all participants, coaches, officials and volunteers.
 - i. To protect youth participants, as well as coaches, officials and volunteers, it is strongly recommended that no adult person allow themselves to be alone with an individual child (unless their own child) or with any group of children during sponsored activities. In particular, it is recommended that coaches or other adult members of the club:
 - 1. Do not drive alone with an individual child participant in the car
 - 2. Do not take an individual child alone to the locker room, bathrooms or any other private room
 - 3. Private conversations with youth participants should occur within the view of others, in the gym or on the field, instead of a private office or hotel room.
 - 4. Coaches and other adults of member clubs should not socialize individually with participants outside of sponsored activities [in the absence of participant's parents]
 - ii. Supervision/Chaperone Ratio
 - 1. It is recommended that for any sponsored activity, the ratio of adults to youth participants be at least 1:9 (1 adult for every 9 children) with a minimum of 2 adults for every activity
 - 2. When traveling overnight with youth participants, children should be paired up with other children of the same gender and similar age group, and with chaperones in separate, but nearby rooms
 - 3. No child should be left alone at a training session or at any other time until they are picked up by their parent, older sibling or other designated adult. It is recommended that the last adult in addition to the coach or trainer wait at the site until the child is picked up.

4. We want to empower our children to trust their feelings and let them know that their concerns, fears and hopes are important by listening to them. Open communication between children and parents, or between children and other adults in the organization may help early warning signs of abuse to surface.

iii. Risk Management

1. All coaches and administrators who are required to register with the Girls Academy must complete a background check, Head's Up Certification and be Safesport Certified, which can be accessed online.
2. Players 18 years of age or older must complete Safesport if a minor 15 years of age and under plays on their team or trains with them within their club.
3. Failure to complete or falsification of the application can result in immediate disqualification or suspension.

iv. Disqualification of Individuals

1. The Girls Academy may deny registration to and disqualify any individual or deny membership to or otherwise discipline any club which employs or utilizes any individual who either fails to comply with the registration procedures, falsified information, or as a result of such procedures is determined by the league commissioner and/or board of directors to be unfit to continue in their current position.

v. Goal Safety

1. Home clubs are responsible for inspecting the goals and ensuring the safety of the goals.
2. However, should the visiting club become aware of a goal safety issue, they should immediately inform the home club and the game official about the issue.
3. The home Clubs should do the following:
 - a. Pre-Game Suggestions
 - i. Make sure that the goal is firmly secured to the ground with anchors
 - ii. Make sure that all connecting hardware (nuts, bolts, etc.) is properly attached

- iii. Make sure that the structural integrity of the goal has not been compromised (cracks in welds or posts, etc.)
- iv. Make sure that the goal is on a level (flat) surface
- v. check the net attachment system to make sure that it is secure and that there are no sharp edges.

b. Post-Game Suggestions

- i. If goals remain in the up-right position, make sure they are secured with ground anchors
- ii. If anchored with portable style anchors, goals should be stored by being chained together face-to-face, or placed in a face down position
- iii. Remove the net when the goal is not in use
- iv. Make sure that all connecting hardware (nuts, bolts, etc.) are in place and secure
- v. Check the structural integrity of the goal
- vi. Never allow anyone to climb on the goals
- vii. If goals are moved, exercise extreme caution and allow adequate manpower to move the goals
- viii. Make sure that warning labels are visible and in good condition.

vi. Field Inspection

1. Home clubs are responsible for inspecting the field and ensuring the safety of the facility. However, should the visiting club become aware of a safety issue at the facility, they should immediately inform the home club and the game official about the issue.
2. The home club should do the following:
 - a. Inspect for foreign objects
 - b. Check for holes, hills or ruts
 - c. Inspect sprinkler heads to make sure that they are seated and properly covered
 - d. Ensure there is a restraining line for spectators at least five (5) feet beyond the touch line and outside of the Inspect bleachers and seating areas

- e. Inspect the field and surrounding areas for any possible “attractive nuisances”
- vii. Referee Responsibility for Safety
 1. All determinations as to the safety of the field, the goals, the balls, player equipment are ultimately the responsibility of the referee assigned to the game.
 2. Any field, equipment or ball conditions deemed by the referee to be unsafe must be corrected by the home club before play can begin or resume.
- viii. Club Liability
 1. To the extent that clubs are not covered by the general liability insurance provided by the league sanctioning body.
 2. Member clubs assume all risks, responsibilities and liabilities for loss, damage, injury or death while using property and facilities during games, whether such loss, damage, injury or death be occasioned by the team or by the league, its officers, agents or otherwise.
- ix. Player Liability
 1. Players shall assume all risks, responsibilities and liabilities for loss, damage, injury or death to themselves while engaged as a player for a club or as a player on a representative team of the league subject to applicable state laws and regulations.
- x. Liability Waiver & Indemnification Form
 1. All coaches, administrators and players and their parents or guardians are required to sign a liability waiver when they submit their registration.