



TOURNAMENT FORMAT & RULES

LONG VERSION

1. **GROUP PLAY** – Teams will play in groups of a round-robin knockout format. All teams will be divided into groups of varying numbers depending on the total number of teams in each group. Each game has three 12 minute periods with 2 minute breaks in between.
2. **WINNERS** – Only the Winner of each group will advance to the playoffs and final games on Sunday. However, the amount of teams advancing from each group will depend on the number of teams playing in that particular group.
3. **POINTS** – Win = 3 points, Tie = 1 point, Loss = 0 points
4. **TIE BREAKER**
 - 4.1. Head to head result.
 - 4.2. If still tied, goal differential to a maximum/minimum of +/- 5 per game. So, if the score is 12-4 for your team in any given game, you will receive a goal differential rating of +5, your opposition will receive -5.
 - 4.3. If still tied, goals against will be tallied. The team who had the fewest total goals scored on them in their round robin games will advance to the playoffs.
 - 4.4. If still tied, a series of 5 penalty shots from the penalty spot from each team will be taken. This shoot-out will be scheduled by tournament organizers at the conclusion of round-robin play. Please see the score board for schedule updates.
 - 4.5. If still tied, sudden death penalty shots will be taken immediately following the 5 initial penalty shots from each team.
 - 4.6. Results, standings and time changes, will be posted on an ongoing basis at the score board. It is the responsibility of each team to follow the standings and to ensure they are present for their matches.
 - 4.7. The referee will in most cases give each game report card to a field marshal who then submits the score to the official score board.
5. **PLAYOFFS & FINAL MATCHES**
 - 5.1. If it is found that unregistered players played in any of your games at any point in the tournament, your team will be immediately disqualified with no refund provided.
 - 5.2. Please see the score board following round-robin play to determine the final playoff schedule. Times of playoffs and final games are subject to change due to required shoot-outs, overtimes, and length of other playoff games.
 - 5.3. If a playoff or final game is tied following regulation time, two 2-minute periods will be played with no break in between.
 - 5.4. No Golden Goal rule will be implemented at any time during play-off games. That is, the full 2 overtime periods will be played to determine a winner.

- 5.5. If the game is tied following overtime, each team will take a series of 5 penalty shots. Any player on or off the field may be designated to take a penalty kick. However, no player may take more than one penalty kick until each player on the team has taken one.
- 5.6. If the game remains tied after the series of 5 penalty kicks, sudden death penalty kicks will be taken until a winner is determined. Only one goalkeeper can be in goal during penalty shootouts.

6. THE AREA OF PLAY, THE GOALS & THE BALL

- 6.1. Field Size – for youth players is 25x35 yards (approximately 1/3 the size of a regulation grass field) and 30x40 yards for adults.
- 6.2. Penalty Box – spans a rectangular area of 9x25-30 yards. Four cones (or flags) will mark this area placed along the sidelines, 9 yards away from each corner.
- 6.3. Corners – will be marked with a cone (or flag). A 1-yard quadrant forms the corner area. A cone (or flag) will be placed on each sideline at midfield to mark the halfway line.
- 6.4. Goal Size – Approximately 7x14 feet. Goals are safely anchored/secured to the sand at the baselines with sandbags.
- 6.5. Game Ball – an official beach soccer game ball will be used for all divisions. No other balls may be used unless absolutely necessary. The referee shall stop the game and the clock to replace any ball showing signs of deformity. Dropping the replacement ball at the center of the court restarts the game.

7. TEAM FORMATION, ROSTERS & SUBSTITUTIONS

- 7.1. The Game – is played by two teams of 5 players on each team, one of who is the goalkeeper unless as specified in Section 7.7 of these rules (see 7.7).
- 7.2. Roster Form – teams can carry a maximum of ten (10) players on their roster and a minimum of five (5). The tournament recommends eight (8) players.
- 7.3. Co-ed Divisions – require a minimum of three (3) female players on a team roster of which two (2) female players must be on the field at all times.
- 7.4. Final Roster – once a team submits its roster at check-in, no additions, substitutions, or deletions can be made after that time. If your team is found to be playing unregistered players at any time during the tournament, your team will be immediately disqualified with no refund provided.
- 7.5. Substitutions – made on the fly. The substitute can enter the field only after the player who is being substituted has completely exited the field of play. If this rule is broken, the team substituting will be charged with too many players on the field. The opposing team will be awarded a direct free kick taken from the halfway line (the kick off spot).
- 7.6. Goalkeeper Substitution – a goalkeeper can substitute for a field player after a shirt change and a field player may be substituted for a goalkeeper as well. Such substitutions may only be made during breaks between periods or after a stoppage in play, and after proper referee notification.
- 7.7. Minimum Players – the number of players on the field for any given team shall be 4. If your team cannot field 4 players, you will automatically forfeit the game 3-0.
- 7.8. No Referee – if no referee is present within ten (10) minutes of the scheduled start time, the game will be rescheduled unless both teams agree to proceed. In such a case, if both teams agree to proceed, both coaches (or assistant coaches) from each team shall agree on being the referees for that game, and the score shall stand as played without protest.

8. OUT OF BOUNDS & SCORING A GOAL

- 8.1.** Out of Bounds – the ball is considered out of play when it completely crosses over the goal line (except when the ball passes between the goal posts and under the cross bar and a goal is scored) or over the side lines.
- 8.2.** Scoring a Goal – takes place when the ball entirely crosses over the goal line, in the air or on the ground, between the goal posts and under the crossbar. After a goal is scored, the game will restart from the center circle at the halfway point of the field (kick off).

9. GOAL KICKS

- 9.1.** When a player from the attacking team passes the ball over the goal line (except when a goal is scored), only the goalkeeper can restart the game. Goal kicks can be with a kick or a throw anywhere within the penalty box area. The keeper may throw or kick the ball past the halfway line during such distribution. All goal kicks are indirect.
- 9.2.** The goalkeeper may not leave the penalty area during a goal kick. For example, the goalkeeper may not dribble the ball outside the penalty area and subsequently play the ball (the ball has to be still when distributing with the feet). If throwing the ball, the keeper may not do so outside the penalty area. If these rules are broken, the opposing team will be awarded a direct free kick taken from the halfway line (the kick off spot).
- 9.3.** The goalkeeper is given 5 seconds when the ball is returned to the field to put the ball into play. If this time rule is broken, the opposing team will be awarded a direct free kick taken from the halfway line (the kick off spot).
- 9.4.** Opponents must remain 5 yards or more away from the goalkeeper during the entire throw or kick during the keeper's first touch of the ball.
- 9.5.** There are no rules about the ball having to exit the penalty area before it can be played. Any player may play the ball once the goalkeeper has touched and moved the ball with his/her feet or hands

10. KICK-INS, THROW-INS & CORNER KICKS

- 10.1.** Kick-Ins & Throw-Ins – when a player touches the ball over the sideline, the opposite team will be awarded an indirect kick-in or throw-in. A player can choose to kick or throw the ball back into play. A goal cannot be scored directly on a kick-in or throw-in (has to touch another player first). Opponents must remain 5 yards or more away from the kicker/thrower during the kick-in or throw-in.
- 10.1.1.** The ball is placed on the sideline where the ball was sent out and kicked on the ground/in the air or thrown back into play.
- 10.1.2.** The kicker cannot be the first player to touch the ball following the kick-in or throw-in. The player taking the kick-in or throw-in will have 5 seconds (when the ball is returned to the field) to put the ball into play. If this time rule is broken an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team from the same location of the infraction.
- 10.2.** Corner Kicks – is direct and given when a player of the defensive team touches the ball over their own goal line (except when a goal is scored).
- 10.2.1.** A corner kick must be taken from within 1 yard of the corner cone (or flag).
- 10.2.2.** Opponents must remain 5 yards or more away from the kicker during a corner kick. The player taking the corner kick will have 5 seconds when the ball is returned to the field to put the ball into play. If this time rule is broken, the corner kick will revert to a goal kick for the opposing team.

11. KICK OFFS, FREE KICKS & PENALTY KICKS

11.1. Kick Offs – indirect. Wall allowed. Opposing players must remain at least five (5) yards away from the kicker.

11.2. Free Kicks – all free kicks are direct. No wall allowed. The kicker will have 5 seconds when the ball is returned to the field and referee has signaled to shoot to take the direct free kick. If this time rule is broken the direct free kick will be reverted to a direct free kick to the opposing team from the same location of the infraction. A direct free kick must be taken by the player who was fouled unless this player is injured and incapable of taking the kick. Opposing players must remain at least five (5) yards away from the kicker.

11.2.1. Example – Positioning of Players during Direct Free Kicks – Defensive Half

If a foul is committed in the fouling team's defensive half of the field, a direct free kick is awarded to the kicking team. Players of both teams must position themselves behind, or on the same line as the game ball, which is placed on the spot of the foul on the infraction line. No player may cross the infraction line until the direct free kick is taken.

11.2.2. Example – Positioning of Players during Direct Free Kicks – Offensive Half

If a foul is committed in the fouling team's offensive half of the field, a direct free kick is awarded to the kicking team. A No Man's Zone will be established from the spot of the foul to each of the goal posts on the fouling team's goal. No player may enter the No Man's Zone until the direct free kick is taken.

11.2.3. There will be no walls allowed and opposing players must remain at least five (5) yards away from the kicker.

11.2.4. When taking a goal kick, direct free kick, corner kick, kick-in, kick-off or penalty kick, a player may make a small mound of sand to elevate the ball's position.

11.2.5. A player who takes a direct free kick, or puts the ball into play, may not touch the ball twice consecutively. Breaking this rule will result in a direct free kick at the point of infraction for the opposing team.

11.2.6. Infractions during direct free kicks – if any irregularity occurs when a direct free kick is being taken, the following will apply:

- 1) If the irregularity is committed by the team taking the direct free kick and the goal is scored, the shot will be repeated.
- 2) If the irregularity is committed by the infringing team, the direct free kick will be repeated unless a goal was scored, in which case, the goal will stand.

NOTE: The above concept is meant to discourage fouls in the defensive end by awarding basically undefended (except for goalkeeper) direct free kicks.

11.3. Penalty Kicks – will be given when a foul is committed by a player inside the penalty box of the infringing team. The penalty kick must be taken by the player who was fouled and done in one continuous movement unless this player is injured and incapable of take the kick. Opposing players must remain at least five (5) yards away from the kicker.

11.3.1. When defending on a penalty kick, goalkeepers may move their fee, but must stay on their goal line until the shot is taken. If the goalkeeper breaks this rule, the penalty kick will be retaken. If the goalkeeper breaks the rule a third time during a game, they will be assessed a red card.

11.3.2. If an irregularity is committed by the team taking the penalty kick and the goal is scored, the penalty kick will be repeated. If an irregularity is committed by the infringing team, the penalty kick will be repeated unless a goal was scored, in which case the goal will stand.

12. OFFSIDES – There are none!

13. GOALKEEPERS & PASS-BACKS

13.1. Goalkeepers – may pick-up the ball with their hands anywhere in the penalty box (9x25-30 yards).

13.1.1. When goalkeepers gain control of the ball inside the penalty box with either their hands or their feet, they may throw the ball back into play or kick it back into play. Punting is allowed.

13.1.2. The goalkeeper may leave the penalty box during such distribution. For example, the goalkeeper may drop the ball, dribble outside of the penalty area, and subsequently play the ball with his/her feet (except during goal kicks).

13.1.3. Goalkeepers cannot score a goal for their own team using their hands. However, if they have gained control of the ball with their feet, they are free to kick the ball any distance and score.

13.1.4. If a goalkeeper brings a ball under control with his/her hands and then drops and rolls the ball along the ground, he/she is free to kick the ball any distance and score. However, the goalkeeper is not permitted to pick the ball up again with his/her hands. If the goalie breaks this rule, the opposing team will be awarded a direct free kick taken from the halfway line (the kick off spot).

13.1.5. Goalkeepers are responsible for all goal kicks (see 9.1.). When the attacking team touches the ball over the goal line and out of play, the goalkeeper is given 5 seconds to either kick (placed on the ground) or throw the ball back into play from anywhere within the penalty box. If the goalkeeper breaks this rule, the opposing team will be awarded a direct free kick taken from the halfway line (the kick off spot).

13.2. Pass-Backs – goalkeepers are allowed to touch the ball with their hands on pass-backs done with the feet of their teammates, but not twice in a row in one possession. Pass-backs with the head or chest can be done unlimited. If the goalkeeper is in or out of the penalty box and the ball is passed back by a teammate, the goalkeeper is free to kick the ball any distance in the air or on the ground without the ball having to touch a player or the ground and score.

14. PLAYER EQUIPMENT

14.1. Foot Wear – no shoes, cleats, or shin guards of any kind are allowed, except thin neoprene socks with no hard rubber sole. Players can play either bare foot, with socks, or athletic tape around their bare feet or around their socks.

14.2. Hats – no hard peaked caps or hats will be permitted.

14.3. No jewelry of any kind is allowed. This includes watches, earrings, etc.

14.4. No players with casts, air-splints, or metal splints of any kind will be allowed to participate.

14.5. Protective Eyewear – special sports goggles are permitted, but regular eye glasses and sun glasses are not allowed.

14.6. Scrimmage Vests – The listed Away Team in the game schedule is required to wear scrimmage vests if necessary to distinguish one team from another. Extra scrimmage vests will be provided by the referee if necessary.

15. STARTING THE GAME

- 15.1. Arrival at the field – arrive at least 15 minutes prior to your game start time.
- 15.2. Home Team & Away Team – designations of Home Team and Away Team are predetermined by the tournament. The Home Team for each game is listed first in the game schedule (e.g., Home Team vs. Away Team).
- 15.3. If required (see 14.6.), the Away Team must ensure they have obtained a set of scrimmage vests from the game referee prior to the start of their game and that each player wears a scrimmage vest.
- 15.4. Home Team – will kick off. The opposing team may make a wall. Kick offs are treated as indirect free kicks.
- 15.5. Away Team – will choose which end they want to defend in the first half.

16. FOULS

- 16.1. A direct free kick will be taken by the opposing team from the place of the infringement if a player commits any of the infractions listed below:
 - 1) Kick or grab an opponent.
 - 2) Push or obstruct an opponent.
 - 3) Touch the ball intentionally with the hand or arm, except for the goalkeeper in the penalty box.
 - 4) Commit a grievous act against the beach soccer attitude such as spit on, strike, or curse at another player, volunteer, referee, or organizer.
 - 5) Commit a dangerous play (e.g., slide tackling from behind, high kicks, etc.).
- 16.2. Free Kicks – will be considered direct free kicks. The kicker is permitted to score directly on his/her first touch. However, the kicker cannot be the first player to touch the ball following the free kick.
- 16.3. Free Kicks – when a free kick is being taken, there will be no wall allowed. No player can position him/herself closer than 5 yards from the kicker and the ball.
- 16.4. The Referee – shall allow play to continue when a team that has suffered the foul will benefit from such advantage, and shall penalize the original offense if the anticipated advantage does not ensue at that time.
- 16.5. Penalty Kicks – will be given when a foul is committed by a player in his/her own team's penalty box. The penalty kick is a direct kick taken at 9 yards distance from the center of the goal with the ball placed on the penalty box line. No players are permitted in the penalty box until the ball is kicked and moved.

17. YELLOW & RED CARDS

- 17.1. Yellow Cards – the referee shall show a yellow card when a player:
 - 1) Commits a serious foul in the interpretation of the referee.
 - 2) Shows by act or word, excessive disagreement with the referee's decision.
 - 3) Shows lack of sportsmanship.
 - 4) Commits an infraction during a free kick, kick off, corner kick, kick-in, or delays the game.

17.2. Red Cards – the referee shall show a red card when a player:

- 1) Receives a second yellow card in one game.
- 2) Intentionally denies, with a foul, an obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent.
- 3) Is guilty of serious foul play.
- 4) Is guilty of violent conduct.
- 5) Uses offensive, insulting, or abusive language.

17.3. Red Card Penalties – the player shall be sent off the field without being able to reenter the game.

17.3.1. The team receiving a red card will not be permitted to substitute for the expelled player.

17.3.2. Red cards may also be issued to coaches, managers, and spectators without caution for a particularly violent or abusive assault on a player, referee, spectator, or organizer. A red card means automatic expulsion for a minimum of one (1) game. The referee will report the reason why the player was ejected to the tournament organizers. Red card offenses will be reviewed by the tournament organizers to determine appropriate action.

18. UNSPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOR OFF THE FIELD

18.1. If a substitute player, coach, or team representative commits a serious aggression, or offends any spectator or participant of the game (i.e., referees, players, organizers, etc.), the referee shall show him/her a red card. He/she shall be sent out of the competition area immediately. The individual's name and reason for suspension will be reported to the tournament organizers for possible additional sanctions.

18.2. When play is stopped for unsportsmanlike behavior, restart will be by a direct free kick from the halfway line (the kick off spot).

19. TOURNAMENT RIGHTS – Santa Cruz Beach Soccer Championships reserves the right to disqualify teams, coaches, managers, or spectators from the tournament site for inappropriate behavior (i.e., swearing, threats, violent acts, etc.). The tournament also reserves the right to alter rules at any time in the interests of improving or clarifying the game.

20. NO PROTESTS ARE ALLOWED