



# Girls Academy Frameworks 2023-2024

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# I. Governance

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## Overview

The Girls Academy Board of Directors will be responsible for the oversight and direction of the competition platform. If there is a conflict between this Framework and the Girls Academy Bylaws, the Bylaws shall prevail.

### A. The Girls Academy Board of Directors Structure

#### a. Officers

- i. President
- ii. Vice President
- iii. Secretary
- iv. Treasurer (Non-GA Club Affiliated)

#### b. Directors

- i. Six(6) Conference Members-At Large (all voting)
- ii. Minimum of two (2), maximum of seven (7) Non-Conference Members-At-Large (all voting)
- iii. League Commissioner (ex-officio, non-voting)

### B. Board of Directors Terms and Election

#### a. Term of Office

- i. President: (2) years, election held on even years
- ii. Vice-President: (2) years, election held on odd years
- iii. Secretary: (2) years, election held on odd years
- iv. Treasurer: (2) years, election held on even years
- v. Members-at-Large: (2) years, election held each year.
  1. No more than half of the Conference Member-at-Large positions shall be up for election in any given year.
  2. No more than half of the Non-Conference Member-at-Large positions shall be up for election in any given year.

#### b. Election of Office

- i. Members shall be elected by the Board of Directors at the annual general meeting to be held via electronic means on 6/09/24

c. Representation of Members

- i. Each conference must be represented on the Board of Directors.

C. Duties of Officers

a. President

i. The President shall:

1. Preside at all meetings of the Girls Academy.
  - Responsible for managing relationships with state offices, sanctioning administrators, sponsors, partners or any additional relationships beneficial to the Girls Academy.
2. Shall have overall responsibility of communicating with state offices, sanctioning administrators, sponsors, partners or any additional relationships beneficial to the Girls Academy.
3. At any meeting at which he/she presides, shall cast the deciding vote in the event of a tie or may waive the right to do so.
4. Shall have overall responsibility for new area development.
5. Submit an annual report in writing at the annual general meeting to all members in attendance, and the report shall become a part of the minutes.
6. Exercise such other duties and responsibilities which are necessary or appropriate for the proper management of the Girls Academy or outlined in the Bylaws.

b. Vice-President

i. The Vice-President shall:

1. Succeed to the duties and responsibilities of the President in his/her absence.
2. Perform any and all responsibilities assigned by the Board of Directors or contained within the Bylaws.

c. Secretary

i. The Secretary shall:

1. Ensure that minutes of all weekly, monthly or annual meetings are taken and shared with the board of directors.

2. Perform any and all responsibilities assigned by the Board of Directors or contained within the Bylaws.

d. Treasurer

i. The Treasurer shall:

1. Perform oversight to the management of all funds.
2. Provide a monthly financial report to the board of directors and at any other time requested by the President and/or the board of directors.
3. Assist the board of directors in preparing a two-year budget for the Girls Academy; two-year budget reviewed annually at the annual general meeting.
4. Enable the completion of an independent audit of the financial accounts and transactions of the Girls Academy; due each even year to the board of directors at the annual general meeting.
5. Perform any and all responsibilities assigned by the Board of Directors or contained within the Bylaws.

D. The Girls Academy Conference Leadership Structure

a. Representatives

- i. Each conference is required to elect a Conference Representative as the liaison to the Board of Directors.
- ii. The Conference Representatives have no voting power within the Girls Academy Governance.
- iii. Conference Representatives are responsible to meet with conference directors once per month and record meeting minutes. Minutes must be shared with the Commissioner and assigned Board Members after each meeting.

b. Term of Office

- i. Conference Representatives: (2) year, election held on even years

c. Election of Office

- i. Each Conference Representative shall be elected by its conference members no later than June 30th of the year preceding their term.
- ii. No Conference Representative may be from the same member club as any member of the Board of Directors.

## II. Technical

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### OVERVIEW

#### PURPOSE OF THE GIRLS ACADEMY

The Girls Academy is a competitive youth soccer platform developed to address the needs of its membership by providing elite quality training and competition environments, access and exposure to college and youth national team scouts, with an emphasis on empowering young women and girls in their playing and personal pathways.

#### AGE GROUPS INVOLVED IN THE GIRLS ACADEMY LEAGUE

Mandatory Age Groups: U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U19

Approved Partial Pathway Clubs are exempt from the mandatory age group requirement

#### MISSION

The Girls Academy's mission is to honor a true commitment, in the pursuit of excellence, to the player above all things: the athlete and the person.

#### VISION

Derived from Core Values:

We believe through collaboration dreams can come true. We will lead the most dynamic development platform imaginable for our athletes, with integrity and respect, showcasing their passion, grit and dedication in a fun and competitive environment.

#### CORE VALUES

League Driven

**Integrity** – Decisions made with sound moral and ethical principles.

**Leadership** – To lead and mentor our athletes to achieve greatness.

**Respect** – Afforded to all stakeholders in the pursuit of excellence.

**Development** – A standards-based approach to optimal development of the athlete and the person.

**Dedication** – To expose our athletes to all possibilities.

**Fun** – Creating long lasting memories with teammates, coaches and competitors.

Player Driven

**Sportsmanship** – Fair and generous behavior towards all.

**Ownership** – Take responsibility for our place in our pathway.

**Confidence** – Feeling self-assurance of one's appreciation of one's own abilities and qualities.

**Grit** – To demonstrate courage and resolve in all we do.

**Passion** – To engage, train and compete with abundant enthusiasm for the game.

#### COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

- a. Girls Academy coaches must, at all times, treat players with respect and dignity.
- b. Girls Academy coaches must treat referees and match officials, at all times, with respect and dignity.

- c. Girls Academy coaches must treat the opposing coaches, at all times, with respect and dignity.
- d. Girls Academy coaches must treat spectators, at all times, with respect and dignity.
- e. Girls Academy coaches are expected to dress professionally, in proper athletic apparel and shoes, at all competitions.
- f. Girls Academy coaches must not discriminate against players based upon race, nationality, religion or sexual orientation.

### **MARKETING AND BRANDING**

- a. Use of the Girls Academy logo for branding purposes is only allowed with **PRIOR APPROVAL** from the League Commissioner.
- b. Each club should be well-versed in the GA Style Guide & Licensing using the link below. [Girls Academy Style Guide and Licensing](#)

### III. League Overview

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#### A. LEAGUE FEES

- a. Club Annual Fee: \$1,100 per team for the 23-24 season
- b. Club Performance Bond: \$3,000.00
  - i. *Refundable upon club departure from GA when deemed in good financial standing.*
  - ii. League Fees will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors
- c. **Travel Costs:** All costs associated with travel to a league game are the responsibility of the individual member club.
- d. **Training/Coaching Costs:** All costs associated with training and coaching are the responsibility of the individual member club.
- e. **Administrative Costs:** All costs associated with operating a team are the responsibility of the individual member club.
- f. **Registration:** All players and coaches must register with the Girls Academy through its sanctioning body to participate.
- g. **Equipment Costs:** All costs associated with equipment are the responsibility of the individual member club.
- h. **Facility Costs:** All costs associated with securing a facility for league games are the responsibility of the home member club. Neutral site fixture costs are determined by participating clubs and must be confirmed and approved by the GA Competitions Manager.
- i. **Referees:** All costs of referees and referee assignors are the responsibility of the home club. Payment of appointed referees is up to the discretion of the home club. At Conference/National Events, referee fees are included in the events fees.
- j. **Other:** Unless otherwise indicated in these regulations, all expenses related to a team shall be paid by the participating club.



## B. TECHNICAL FRAMEWORK

- a. Game Length
  - i. All U13, U14 and U15 games will be two (2) 40-minute halves with 10-minute halftime
  - ii. U16, U17 and U19 games will be two (2) 45-minute halves with a 10-minute halftime
- b. Player Eligibility & Registration
  - i. Registration: All registration will be completed via GotSoccer . The league Director of Operations will distribute instructions to each member annually.
    - 1. Proof of age for a player in the form of a passport or birth certificate uploaded to the club depository in GotSport under player profile.
    - 2. Signed GA waiver and USSSA waiver for each player in GotSport.
    - 3. GA Photo and Video Consent Form in GotSport.
    - 4. Registration fee via credit card for pre-billing.
    - 5. ITC's are recommended for foreign players.
      - a. Must complete the clearance process outlined in section VI. B. 1 of the U.S. Soccer Federation Bylaws and Policies
    - 6. Soccer photo headshot uploaded in GotSport under the player profile.
    - 7. Jersey number must be included.
    - 8. SafeSport is required for all players who turn 18 during the season. Must be uploaded to the player profile.
    - 9. Player(s) must be registered/approved to the roster and listed on the match card in advance of the game.
      - a. There are no write in's.

**Note:** League staff shall have the authority to establish additional procedures, including deadlines, for registration of players.

- ii. All coaches and managers must be registered and approved to the roster at the start of the season or as soon as they are hired or begin working in the GA in GotSport including:
  - 1. USSSA/GA background screening
  - 2. SafeSport
  - 3. Head'sUp
  - 4. GA waiver
  - 5. USSSA waiver

## 6. Coaching license

## 7. USSSA Membership

- iii. Athletic Trainers Certified (ATCs) who work with your teams, whether employed by or contracted out by your club, should have proof of background checks and Safesport Certification. This is the responsibility of each club.
- c. Rosters
- i. *General*
    1. Each member is required to submit an initial roster by August 1 of each seasonal year.
    2. Rosters will remain open until **June 7, 2024, 5pm CT** in which rosters will freeze for any team that has qualified for playoffs.
    3. **Up to two age eligible current college players who were members of your Girls Academy team the previous season may be added to your roster for the playoffs ONLY. If they are added and approved prior to playoffs, they may train with your team, but may not play in league matches.**
      - a. **If a player attends college but does not play college soccer, they are eligible to play GA conference league games and events if they fall into the birth year age groups for U19.**
      - b. **If a player has graduated high school, but is not entering college yet, i.e. taking a GAP year, they are eligible to play GA conference league games and events if they fall into the birth year age groups for U19.**
  - ii. *Player status*
    1. Primary/P:
      - a. Player from your club on a GA team who only participates in the GA.
      - b. A minimum of 10 Primary (P) players per roster.
        - i. If violated there will be a \$500 fine, match forfeiture and loss of playoff eligibility.
    2. Secondary/S:

- a. Part time/development player within your club, but not on a GA team as a P.
- b. Part time/development player from another club.
  - i. A written formal agreement signed by both clubs then emailed with both clubs copied to the GA Director of Operations prior to being added to the roster.
  - ii. Player must participate in one day a week in-person training at the GA club main facility (not satellite). i.e. Zoom is not in-person training.
- c. Players can only play age appropriate or up, unless designated and approved by the league as a "Late Developer". \*CP not available for S players due to GotSport set-up/functionality. \* Add in roster builder for approval by the GA.
- d. After 14 games, all GA competitions including league and event matches, the player moves to a P player in the GA or returns to original club
- e. If violated there will be a \$500 fine, match forfeiture and loss of playoff eligibility.

### 3. Remote/R

- a. Player(s) from the 16 non-GA states: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Mississippi, Montana,, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming.
- b. and/or players from a geographical area not in the GA. Players who live within driving distance of another club possibly in another state i.e., Reno, NV to play with a N. CA club.
- c. and/or affiliate player(s)
  - i. A written formal agreement signed by both clubs, then emailed with both clubs copied to the GA Director of Operations prior to being added to the roster.
  - ii. Must be approved by the league prior to being added to the roster

- iii. Affiliates must be in-market, not someone out of market and under the same brand.
  - iv. Clubs are allowed 6 maximum remote players; with a maximum of 2 per team on a game day roster.
  - v. Once you hit your max, clubs cannot release/remove to add additional R players.
  - vi. No training required
  - vii. If violated there will be a \$500 fine, match forfeiture and loss of playoff eligibility.
4. Club Pass/CP:
- a. For a player to show up in your CP player pool, they must be approved as Primary/P on an existing GA roster within your club already. CP players are automatically approved. THIS IS A GOTSPORT FUNCTION WE CANNOT CHANGE.
  - b. Roster rules, such as age and roster size will still apply to the addition of CP players.  
CP players can only play up in an age group, unless they are a late developer.
  - c. NO WRITE-INS ALLOWED (a jersey number may be written in if necessary, but not a player)
5. Guest/G:
- a. U15-U17: Only available for summer showcase events when approved by the GA Commissioner.
  - b. U-19: Available for all showcases. Guest (G) must be a current GA player and age group eligible. (*This does not include Champions Cup and Summer Playoffs*)
  - c. GK Guest Player Amendment for Playoffs: ADDED FOR 22/23
    - i. The amendment allows for an age eligible GK to be a guest player if any injury occurs.
    - ii. Requests must be made in advance of the roster freeze.
    - iii. Clubs must exhaust all efforts of securing a GK within their club and provide this to the GA - Director of Operations.
    - iv. Must be approved by sending the medical report to the GA Director of Operations
    - v. If violated there will be a \$500 fine, match forfeiture and loss of playoff eligibility.
6. Late Developer: Club requests parameters and metric data information from the league to submit. Approval/Denial will come from the league office. Requests restricted to U13 & U14 Age Groups.
7. Player Registration

- a. All players on a GA Roster must be GA registered primary(P) players or secondary (S) players, and/or remote (R) from within your club or approved by the league secondary players from outside of your club.
8. Trapped Player Expectations
  - a. U19 Age Group
    - i. A Girls Academy player that is in 11th grade, but who is age appropriate for the U19 age group is defined as a Trapped Player.
    - ii. A U19 Trapped Player is eligible to participate in games at two (2) U17 GA National Events and the Summer Showcase.
      1. Note: A U19 Trapped Player is not eligible to compete in Champions Cup and the GA Summer Playoffs.
  - b. U15 Age Group
    - i. A Girls Academy Player that is in the 8th grade, but who is age appropriate for the U15 age group is defined as a Trapped Player.
    - ii. A U15 Trapped Player is eligible to participate in games at one (1) U14 GA Regional Event while her teammates compete in high school.
9. Clubs holding two spots within the Girls Academy
  - a. Clubs with two spots in the Girls Academy are allowed to move players from their second to first teams at any point in the season prior to the roster freeze date for playoffs after approval from the league. For a primary (P) player to be moved to the second team from the first team, there must be appropriate developmental rationale presented to the league and the Commissioner must approve the move.
  - b. The understanding of clubs provided with two spots in the league is that the top level players in the club are required to be rostered with the first team. This includes YNT, IDC, and any players in youth national team pools. Outside the USYNT, player roster placement will be reviewed by the league for approval.
- iii. Roster Size
  1. The maximum roster size on a Team's Roster is 30 at one time per age group with 18 designated on gameday.
- iv. Game Roster Size
  1. 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/match card (showing players that will start and players eligible for substitution).
  2. 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 Athletic Trainer Certified (ATC).

- d. Substitutions
- i. The Girls Academy [Substitution Sheet](#) must be used for substitutions during all Girls Academy games.
  - ii. Home team must provide the [Substitution Sheet](#) to the match officials.
  - iii. All games will have a maximum of seven (7) substitutes per half with no re-entry per half across five (5) moments, no more than three (3) moments per half.
  - iv. Halftime does not count as a moment.
  - v. Substitutions are allowed at any stoppage.
  - vi. Substitution Rules for the following GA Events: Champions Cup, National Showcase, and Regionals, are modified for U13-U19 age groups, reference - COMPETITION, C, ii
  - vii. Overtime (Playoff and Champions Cup U13-U19 Advancement Games)
    1. Once a player is substituted in any period of overtime of any GA Advancement Game, then such player may not re-enter the game.
    2. Advancement Games shall permit a maximum of three (3) moments across both halves of overtime with a maximum of two (2) moments per half.
      - a. The stoppage between each period of overtime does not count as a moment.
    3. The overtime periods shall permit a maximum of seven (7) substitutes total.
  - viii. Games shall follow Rules of Competition Framework provided for at the beginning of each season.
  - ix. Head Injury Substitution (Concussion Substitution)
    1. A player who suffers a potential head Injury may be temporarily substituted for to be evaluated by a HCP.
    2. 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.
    3. This process will utilize a traffic light system.
      - a. **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.

- b. **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.
- x. No Remaining Substitutions
  - 1. If the team does not have any remaining Substitutions, the Temporary Substitute will be permitted to remain in the match.
- xi. Delays in Evaluation
  - 1. 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.
- xii. Case Examples (All cases relate to presumed head injuries. All circumstances are independent of each other. Presume all occur in different matches.)
  - 1. Team A #1 is removed to be evaluated in the 8th minute of the match. She is cleared to return in the 15'.
    - a. A Temporary Substitution may occur in the 8th. Upon her clearance, she returns to the match, so there is no substitution charged.
  - 2. 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.
    - a. #3 becomes a permanent Substitution in the first half, a Substitution is charged.
  - 3. 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.
    - a. In both circumstances, Team B is charged the first half Substitution as #2 ended the period in #1s absence.
  - 4. 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.
    - a. #5 may remain in the match.
- e. Game Disciplinary
  - i. Red Cards - Players
    - 1. Regular Season



- a. 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.
  - i. Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the GA Commissioner.
- b. Players with an accumulation of two (2) or more red cards during the GA season will be subject to review by the league.

## 2. Events (National and Regional)

- a. Any player receiving a red card in a GA Event Competition (Regional, Champions Cup, Showcase, Playoffs) will be suspended for the remainder of that match. The player will also be suspended for the next match day played by their club for both their specific age group and any other age group in a GA Event Competition.
  - i. Note: Additional suspensions or sanctions may be imposed by the GA Commissioner.

## ii. Red Cards - Coaches

### 1. Regular Season

- a. 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.
  - i. 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.

### 2. Events (National and Regional)

- a. Any approved GA coach receiving a red card in a GA Event Competition (Regional, Champions Cup,

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.

- i. 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.
    3. Yellow Card Accumulation
      - a. There shall be no yellow card accumulation policy for players or coaches in the GA.
  - iii. Red Card Carryover
    1. 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.
    2. 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.
    3. 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.
    4. 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.
  - iv. Reporting
    1. Referees will complete the SEND OFF RED CARD REPORT at the end of a game in which any dismissal has taken place. Dismissals include:
      - a. Player and/or coach red cards.
      - b. Any non-coaching staff member told to leave the technical area and/or field.
      - c. Any spectator told to leave the field.

2. Club Directors are to immediately contact the Girls Academy Commissioner in the event of a significant disciplinary incident. ([Commissioner@girlsacademyleague.com](mailto:Commissioner@girlsacademyleague.com)) This is including but not limited to:
  - a. Player and/or coach red card send-off for violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior.
  - b. Non-coaching staff member send-off for violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior.
  - c. Spectator send-off for violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior.
  - d. Violent conduct, abusive language, and/or abusive behavior by any of the above parties prior to or after the match.
- f. Game Limits
  - i. Any GA Registered Player may only play on one (1) GA Team per day, and may only play in one (1) GA Competition per day or scheduled GA match.
- g. Fixture Ties
  - i. Once players play in a scheduled club fixture, they are unable to play in a rescheduled fixture in any other age group.
  - ii. A fixture includes the games from U13-U19 when one club plays another club. When the fixture is on different days (whether split on purpose or rescheduled), the fixture is still considered to be “one fixture”.
- h. Recruiting
  - i. Member clubs may recruit players for participation on GA teams at any time during the year with following exception:
    1. Member clubs may not invite a GA player to train, invite a GA player to tryout, or offer a roster position in a GA team until 4 weeks prior to the June roster freeze date.
    2. Training is not permitted until after the GA teams season has concluded. Unless the player has been released in good standing by the previous GA club
  - ii. Note: refer to section III. Technical Frameworks subsection ‘Player Transfers’ k-i & k-ii. for between member clubs for a player release or transfer during the current season.
- i. Tryouts
  - i. The GA does not mandate when a club can and cannot have tryouts for its teams. Thus, tryouts for Girls Academy teams may be held at any time of the year.
  - ii. Note: refer to section III. Technical Frameworks subsection Player Transfers k-i & k-ii. for between member clubs for a player release or transfer during the current season.

- j. Same-Market Player Policy
  - i. As a new GA member club, any current GA player that reaches out from a current GA club and/or registers for a new GA club's tryouts must first be approved by the player's current GA club.
  - ii. Approval email with both GA Academy Directors copied must be provided to [ops@girlsacademyleague.com](mailto:ops@girlsacademyleague.com) in advance of the tryouts.
- k. Player Transfers
  - i. May occur with the approval of both club directors. Players transferring from one club to another shall not compete against their former club for that GA competition year. (Aug 1 ending with summer national finals).
  - ii. For a player to leave another GA club to join another GA club, that player must be in good financial standing with the club they are leaving. That is for the clubs to administer and monitor, not the league.
- l. Game Roster Size
  - i. 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/match card (showing players that will start and players eligible for substitution).
  - ii. 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 Athletic Trainer Certified (ATC).
  - iii. The minimum number of registered club staff (see above) is ONE. A game will be recorded as a forfeit if no club staff members are available.
- m. Match Cards
  - i. The official game day roster must be provided on the non-photo standard match cards and shall be presented to the referee by both teams 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.
  - ii. It is the responsibility of the home clubs to report scores and any disciplinary actions for each fixture. This must be submitted within 36 hours of the completion of the match or be subject to a fine and/or penalties.
  - iii. The GA Staff will update the rosters weekly on the website to reflect any suspensions, additions or drops, or other eligibility issues.

- n. Eligible Player
  - i. 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.
  - ii. All players must be registered to the club in the league system and approved in GotSport.
- o. Ineligible Player
  - i. 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.
  - ii. Any member club using an ineligible player during any competition may be subject to a \$500 fine per infraction 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.
- p. GK Amendment to the Loan Player Rule
  - i. 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 (only with documentation from a medical professional) OR in the event of a USYNT call-up (only with documentation from U.S. Soccer)
  - ii. 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.
  - iii. Otherwise, all requests due to injury or callup must be approved via email to the Director of Operations in advance of the game.
  - iv. Once approved, clubs must inform their opponent of the approval via email.

## C. RISK MANAGEMENT

### a. Overview

- i. 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.
  1. 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.
  2. 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.
  3. 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.
  4. The Girls Academy will respond quickly to any and all allegations of abuse within this organization. The alleged offender will be notified of such allegations promptly.

### b. Conduct

- i. 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.
- ii. 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]
- iii. 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.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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.

c. Goal Safety

- i. Home clubs are responsible for inspecting the goals and ensuring the safety of the goals.
- ii. 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.
- iii. The home Clubs should do the following:
  1. Pre-Game Suggestions
    - a. Make sure that the goal is firmly secured to the ground with anchors
    - b. Make sure that all connecting hardware (nuts, bolts, etc.) is properly attached
    - c. Make sure that the structural integrity of the goal has not been compromised (cracks in welds or posts, etc.)
    - d. Make sure that the goal is on a level (flat) surface
    - e. check the net attachment system to make sure that it is secure and that there are no sharp edges.
  2. Post-Game Suggestions
    - a. If goals remain in the up-right position, make sure they are secured with ground anchors
    - b. If anchored with portable style anchors, goals should be stored by being chained together face-to-face, or placed in a face down position
    - c. Remove the net when the goal is not in use
    - d. Make sure that all connecting hardware (nuts, bolts, etc.) are in place and secure
    - e. Check the structural integrity of the goal
    - f. Never allow anyone to climb on the goals
    - g. If goals are moved, exercise extreme caution and allow adequate manpower to move the goals



- h. Make sure that warning labels are visible and in good condition.

d. Field Inspection

- i. 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.
- ii. The home club should do the following:
  - 1. Inspect for foreign objects
  - 2. Check for holes, hills or ruts
  - 3. Inspect sprinkler heads to make sure that they are seated and properly covered
  - 4. 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
  - 5. Inspect the field and surrounding areas for any possible “attractive nuisances”

e. Referee Responsibility for Safety

- i. 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.
- ii. 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.

f. Club Liability

- i. To the extent that clubs are not covered by the general liability insurance provided by the league sanctioning body.
- ii. 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.

g. Player Liability

- i. 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.

#### h. Liability Waiver & Indemnification Form

- i. All coaches, administrators and players and their parents or guardians are required to sign a liability waiver when they submit their registration.

### D. EQUIPMENT

#### a. Uniforms

- i. 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.
- ii. Member clubs are required to have one light colored uniform and one dark uniform. Jersey and socks should be all dark or all light.
- iii. Home teams will be required to wear light colored uniforms and away teams will be required to wear dark colored uniforms.
- iv. Home teams will be responsible for changing in the event of a conflict and will choose their uniforms and visiting teams will be required to wear their contrasting uniforms.
- v. Teams are *not required to wear white shorts* as a part of either their dark or light kits.
- vi. Jerseys and socks should match in their color and/or shade (ie. dark/dark or light/light).
- vii. On a double fixture weekend, it is required for teams to coordinate uniform colors ahead of time for the entire weekend to avoid conflicts.

#### b. Girls Academy Patches

- i. Member clubs are required to apply a GA patch on the left sleeve, back collar or under the number of their game uniform.

#### c. Goals, Nets, Corner Flags and Benches

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

### E. COMPETITIONS STRUCTURE

#### a. Overview

- i. League schedules are organized in collaboration with the Competitions Manager and the conference scheduling liaisons.
- ii. The GA board of directors reserves the right to adjust game scheduling or conference alignment..

b. Conference Structure

- i. The Competition Manager in collaboration with Conference scheduling liaisons creates the conference competition structure.
- ii. Minimum number of conference league matches per season, to be eligible for playoffs, is **13** for the 23-24 season.
  1. Cross-conference matches do not count as conference league matches. (unless mandated by the league).
  2. Regional/National Event matches do not count as conference league matches.
  3. Only the first 3 Champions Cup matches count in the National Standings.
  4. Conference schedule must be completed to be eligible for playoffs unless otherwise approved by the board due to extenuating circumstances.
  5. Outside of National Events, **a maximum of 4 approved** Cross-Conference matches will count towards the Nationals Standings, but not in the conference league standings. Any other cross-conference matches are strictly considered friendlies unless they are pre-approved by the league due to extenuating circumstances.
- iii. Teams must participate in a minimum of one National Event for playoff eligibility, which consists of a minimum of 3 games within the event. If weather or other circumstances prevent this from happening, the league will work with the club to create other ways to satisfy this standard, or make a determination for an exception.
- iv. **Clubs with two spots in the Girls Academy that are competing in the same conference must schedule their fixtures between the two teams prior to 75% of the game schedule being completed.**
- v. All regular season conference matches must be completed by **the end of day of June 2, 2024** to ensure proper determination of postseason qualifiers for the Girls Academy National Playoffs/Showcase.
- vi. **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 fined and denied participation in the national playoffs, however the final determination of eligibility will be made by the board of directors.**

- vii. Cancellations of games not impacting the National Playoffs must be approved by and are at the discretion of the board of directors.
- c. Venue/Kick-off Times
  - i. Home team must submit the **MATCH DAY FORM** 5 days prior to the match.
  - ii. Any identified blackout date shall have no conference league match scheduled on that particular date.
  - iii. The venues and specific kick-off times of the games shall be proposed by the home team and agreed upon by the visiting team.
  - iv. Double fixture weekends may be played; however, eighteen hours is needed between both kick-off times to allow for necessary travel and recovery.
    - 1. Example: If a Saturday fixture kick-off is 6 pm local time, the Sunday fixture may not kick-off earlier than 12 pm local time unless permitted by the Competitions Manager or agreed upon by both the home and away teams.
- d. The sequence of games must conform to the following guidelines:
  - i. The Girls Academy requires that all age groups play in the same facility on the same day, unless agreed upon by both the home and away clubs; and approved by the Competitions Manager
  - ii. Game schedules require at least 30 minutes of warm up time between each kickoff.
  - iii. Less than 30 minutes between games is permitted if there is adequate warm up space in an adjacent area.
- e. Facility Set-Up
  - i. Two fields should be available for a Girls Academy fixture.
  - ii. The home team shall be responsible for setting up its venue to include the appropriate lines, goals, nets, corner flags, benches, and tents.
- f. Standings
  - i. All match cards must be submitted within 24 hours of the finish of the game by the club designated as the home team.
    - 1. Points
      - a. Three points for a win
      - b. One point for a tie
      - c. Zero points for a loss
      - d. Forfeit = 0-3 loss

*ii. Conference Tiebreakers*

1. The ranking of each team in the conference will be determined as follows:
  - a. greatest points per game obtained in all conference league games (ppg)
2. If two or more teams are equal on the basis of the above criteria, rankings will be determined as follows:
  - a. greatest goal difference per game in all conference league games (gd)
  - b. greatest number of goals scored per game in all conference league games (gf)
  - c. least number of goals allowed per game in all conference league games (ga)
  - d. total points earned head to head (NA if more than 2 teams are tied)
  - e. total number of wins in conference league play

*iii. National Tiebreakers*

1. The ranking of each team in the National Standings, which determines Wildcard selection, will be determined as follows:
  - a. greatest points per game obtained in all conference league and event games (ppg)
    - i. with the exception of games played as part of the Champions Cup Finals
2. If two or more teams are equal on the basis of the above criteria, rankings will be determined as follows:
  - a. greatest goal difference per game in all conference league and event games (gd)
  - b. greatest number of goals scored per game in all conference league and event games (gf)
  - c. least number of goals allowed per game in all conference league and event games (ga)
  - d. total points earned head to head (NA if more than 2 teams are tied)
  - e. total number of wins in conference league and event play

## F. MATCH DAY PROTOCOLS & MINIMUM STANDARDS

As a member of the Girls Academy, all clubs are expected to provide a professional match day environment. In order to ensure all member clubs maintain a consistent, professional environment for the players and spectators, the Match Day Protocols and Minimum Standards for the Girls Academy season are listed below.

Emergency Match Day concerns or questions should be directed to the Commissioner and Director of Operations by calling the GA phone line at **708-593-5218**. All other protocols and standards will be submitted post-fixture as outlined below.

### a. MATCH DAY PROTOCOLS & MINIMUM STANDARDS CHECKLIST

A home club representative is to be at the field an hour prior to game time. When arriving, each club needs to identify a club representative to be the sole point of contact for the fixture. Each club representative is to verify information provided in the match day protocols. Match day protocols and standards feedback must be communicated by the visiting club contact with the Competitions Manager within 48 hours following the fixture. Responses will be collected by the league and addressed as needed. [Match Day Protocols and Minimum Standards via Member Portal](#)

#### i. MATCH CARDS

1. Both home and away teams must provide the “standard” non photo match card for each match. Match cards must list all rostered players, coaching staff and club/team managers. Any players not participating in a match, due to injury or suspension or not dressing, must be crossed off the match card. Referees need to check in players on the roster. Any player checked in, regardless if they play, will count as a rostered player and is an ineligible player for any other match in the fixture. Any secondary and/or remote players must be approved by the GA in GotSport. No write-ins allowed except for emergency use only and pre-approved by the league office via phone-call with written confirmation for tracking.
2. ***The home team must enter the score, red and/or yellow cards as well as upload the game card within 24 hours in GotSport.***

**Note:** Once entered into GotSport, any player who receives a red card will automatically be suspended for the next game in GotSport with a red line through their name on the roster. The competition manager will confirm red cards with the match card and the referees reporting form.

### b. COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

- i. The host club is required to provide the visiting club with all match day details at least five (5) days prior to the competition. Match day details would include, but are not limited to the following:
  1. Facility address, directions, weather forecast, fixture schedule, field numbers, etc...

2. No matches shall be scheduled prior to 9:00 AM, unless both clubs agree in writing.
3. All matches must be scheduled to end at least 30 minutes prior to sunset, unless lights are provided, and the visiting club agrees to a later start time in writing.
4. All clubs are expected to schedule matches with professionalism and goodwill, meaning not to place any club at a competitive advantage or disadvantage.
5. All matches played on the same day are expected to be played at the same facility, unless the visiting club agrees to multiple facilities being utilized in writing.
6. If two facilities are being used, both facilities must meet all game day standards.
7. Clubs must agree on the fixture time schedule to avoid coaching conflicts.
8. The Girl's Academy phone number is **708-593-5218** and should be used if any game day questions or concerns arise.
9. [A SAMPLE MATCH DAY DETAILS FORM](#)

c. *MINIMUM STANDARDS*

- i. The following are minimum standards expected for all matches. It is the responsibility of the host club to meet the following standards at all matches. If any hosting club is unable to meet any of the minimum standards the club must receive approval from the Competitions Manager no later than **48-hours** prior to an event or face a financial penalty.
- ii. Match Field
  1. The match field provided for matches must be of the highest quality in the geographic area. Turf or natural surface are both acceptable. A minimum match field size of 70 yards (W) x 110 yards (L) is expected. Natural grass surfaces should be mowed to a length that allows for high quality ball movement; 1.5-2.5", depending on grass species, is the typical height range for mowing.

**Note:** If the field quality requirement is not met, there will be one warning and the next incident will result in a fine of \$500 for not meeting minimum match standards.

**Note:** If inclement weather is expected during a match weekend, then it is expected for member clubs to have a turf field back-up.

- iii. Field Setup

1. Team sideline requires both the home and away team to have (2) benches or (1) bench large enough for team and staff.
  2. Team sideline requires both the home and away team to have matching team tents available for weather (excessive heat/rain) and where space in the technical area permits.
  3. Team sideline requires a minimum of (1) trashcan.
  4. Team sideline requires 2 tables providing both water.
  5. All match fields are marked properly in accordance with FIFA rules.
  6. All match fields must have (4) matching corner flags.
  7. Adidas match balls will be provided by the league and 3 adidas balls must be at each match.
- iv. Facility
1. Each facility must have permanent or portable restrooms on site and available to players and spectators.
- v. Filming of Matches
1. All member clubs will be responsible for the filming of all home games in all age groups U13-U19 and uploading matches into the league exchange provider through **Veo** within **48 hours** of the last match of weekend fixtures. **As per the Fine & Penalties (pp. 34 of the Frameworks), clubs with games not uploaded within 48 hours of the last match of the weekend will incur a \$500 fine per missing game.**
- vi. Athletic Trainer
1. An athletic trainer must be provided for all matches, a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the first match and continuing until the end of the final match.
- vii. Referees
1. 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.



2. 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](mailto: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.

viii. Referee Compensation

1. 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 US Officials or other avenues. No payment of any type post-game. At Conference/National Events, the referee fees are included in event fees.
2. Age=Center/AR1/AR2/4th Official
  - a. U13-U15= \$85/\$55/\$55 + \$45 for a 4th\*\*
  - b. U16-U19= \$95/\$65/\$65 + \$45 for a 4th\*\*
  - c. **\*\*Note:** 4th Officials are not required for Girls Academy matches.

## G. GUIDELINES FOR RESCHEDULES, POSTPONEMENTS AND GAME FORFEITURES

- a. Rescheduling Considerations
  - i. U13, U14 and U15 games must reach the 60:00 minute mark to be considered a completed game.
  - ii. U16, U17 and U19 games must reach the 70:00 minute mark to be considered a completed game.
- b. 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:
  - i. Documented communication between club directors stating the reason for postponement and mutual agreement to the postponement.
  - ii. Documented agreement on the reschedule date, time, and locations of postponed fixtures/games must be agreed upon by both parties.
  - iii. 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.
  - iv. **If a rescheduled date is not submitted within 7 days of the initial postponement, the Competitions Manager will choose a date based on club availability and update the fixture in the official schedule.**
  - v. 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.).
  - vi. Clubs not following the proper protocol for reschedules are subject to fines and loss of points.
  - vii. Same-day weather cancellations (Acts of God, etc.) of league games will be considered postponed and the same expectations will apply.
    1. **Note:** Same-day cancellations must be communicated to the Competitions Managers via email as soon as the decision has been made in real time.
  - viii. 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.
    1. Notification to the Competitions Manager no later than 48 hours prior to the match. The instances of forfeiture include, but are not limited to:
      - a. Use of an ineligible player (no card, DOB, etc.)
      - b. Lack of official roster or game cards at the start of a game
      - c. Re-entry of substituted player in the same half of a game (no re-entry in the same half)
- c. If a game does not reach the designated threshold, the league shall have the authority to review all of the facts in determining whether and when a game

should be rescheduled, whether the game should be forfeited or canceled permanently. The determination by the league shall be final.

d. **Forfeiture of all age groups:**

- i. Team forfeiting one (1) regular season game, subject to a \$1,000 fine.
- ii. Team forfeiting second regular season game in a single season, subject to another \$1,000 fine.
- iii. Team forfeiting third game in a single season:
  1. subject to a \$1,000 fine
  2. Additional \$5,000 fine
  3. Team is ineligible for playoffs
  4. Number of Champions Cup points earned for that team is forfeited (Zero points) in that season
  5. Potential club review
- iv. Team forfeiting four or more games in a single season will be reviewed by the Competitions Committee and Board of Directors to determine fines and additional consequences.

## H. NONCONFORMITY OF MEMBERSHIP

All member clubs are expected to meet and adhere to the rules & regulations and minimum standards of the league at all times. The purpose of the rules & regulations and minimum standards is to promote and ensure uniformity of the Girls Academy Members nationwide.

If a member club displays consistent non-compliance with the rules & regulations and minimum standards then it can lead to their membership being revoked.

All additional penalties and/or fines not outlined below are left to the discretion of the league commissioner and board of directors are final and shall be in full force and effect.

### a. FINES & PENALTIES

- i. **ALL GIRLS ACADEMY FEES (EVENTS, MEMBERSHIP DUES, FINES, PLAYER REGISTRATION FEES, COACH REGISTRATION FEES, ETC) WILL BE INVOICED TO CLUBS VIA EMAIL AND ARE DUE UPON RECEIPT.**
- ii. Note: Commissioner's Discretion on all instances with extenuating circumstances.
- iii. Non-compliance will subject the club to membership review and playoff participation eligibility.
- iv. All fines can be appealed within 24 hours of receipt of the fine invoice and are subject to review by the League Commissioner and Board of Directors

### b. PAYMENT OF FINES

- i. All fines must be submitted in the form of a certified check, cashier's check, money order or wire transfer/ACH made payable to the "Girls Academy".

**Note:** A fee of \$250 will be charged for appeals, protests, and/or grievances. If they are completed successfully, then all except \$100.00 of the fee submitted will be returned.

### c. NOTIFICATION

- i. Proper notification of appeals, protests, and/or grievances shall occur in writing via email and will be considered received when confirmed by the league commissioner.

List of Offenses	Fine Amount	Notes
Event Registration - Late	\$100	Increases by \$100 each week the <b>balance is unpaid</b>
Event Registration Cancellation 2 Weeks	<b>Double Full Event Amount</b>	Within 2 weeks of the event
Event Registration Cancellation 4 Weeks	<b>Full Event Amount</b>	Within 4 weeks of the event
Forfeit	\$1,000 <b>per game</b>	Reference (pp. 32 - G, d) for additional consequences for three or more forfeits
Inappropriate Coach Behavior	\$500 <b>per game</b>	
Inappropriate Player Behavior	Case by Case Suspension/Fine	
Inappropriate Spectator Behavior	\$500 <b>per game</b>	
Ineligible Coach	\$500 <b>per game</b>	
Ineligible Player	\$500 <b>per game</b>	
No Video Upload <b>Veo</b>	\$500 <b>per game</b>	
Non Approved Postponement (Home Team to Communicate)	\$500 <b>per game</b>	
Fine for not registering/attending <b>a required event (including Playoffs and Finals)</b>	<b>\$5,000 and no playoffs</b>	End of season club review
Not Meeting Match Day Standards	\$500	

## IV. Rules of Competition

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### COMPETITION RULES & REGULATIONS

#### A. GENERAL

- a. Unless otherwise provided in these Regulations, all Girls Academy competitions shall be played in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game in force at the time of competition as provided by the International Football Association Board.
- b. 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.
- c. 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.

#### B. CONDUCT

- a. 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.

#### C. EVENT RULES & SPECTATOR BEHAVIOR

- a. Attendees must listen to and follow instructions from Girls Academy staff members.
  - i. Non-compliance will result in their club potentially being fined.
  - ii. Non-compliant individuals may not be allowed to return to the facility.
  - iii. Example: Individuals must return to their cars or designated shelters for lightning or other when instructed by GA event staff.
- b. The GA will not be held liable if an injury results from not following GA instructions.
- c. Home Club must ensure parents/spectators do not enter the team sideline area or the field of play. Spectators/Families should sit directly across from their team bench where practical.
- d. GA spectators/parents must adhere to regulations surrounding the sale or possession of alcohol and/or other substances at GA sanctioned competitions.

#### D. TRAINING AND GAME EXPECTATIONS

- a. Member clubs are responsible for adhering to all game day policies and procedures outlined and explained in the Girls Academy Technical Frameworks & Technical Standards.
- b. Member clubs should make efforts to acquire the best facilities possible. Member clubs must train and play home league games within reasonable geographic proximity to their club's home location unless approved by the board of directors.
- c. If a club is unable to provide a home field that meets minimum standards, the club may be asked for an alternate location or may lose the right to host games.

## E. LAWS OF THE GAME, DISCIPLINARY MATTERS, DISPUTES, PROTESTS & APPEALS

### a. Laws of the Game

#### i. General

1. 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.

#### ii. Disciplinary Matters

1. Disciplinary incidents are dealt with by the league commissioner and board of directors.
2. The players and member 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.

##### a. The Players and Coaches agree notably to:

- . respect the spirit of fair play
- i. non-violence
- ii. behave accordingly
- iii. refrain from illegal use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco

#### 3. Disputes

- a. 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.

#### 4. Protest & Appeals

##### a. Overview

- . 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.

b. Time

- . 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 within **48 hours**, including a copy of the original protest, to be sent in writing to the Girls Academy; otherwise they will be disregarded.

c. Eligibility

- . 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.

d. Field Conditions

- . 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. This shall be noted on the MDP & MS form and the league Competitions Manager notified prior to kick-off.
- i. 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.

e. Referee's Decisions

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

f. Frivolous Protests

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

g. Game Fixing Policy

- . The Girls Academy prohibits game fixing of any kind.



- i. Any member clubs that condone or contemplate game fixing will be subject to immediate dismissal from the program and may face additional sanctioning.

## F. COMPETITION

### A. LIST OF EVENTS 2023-2024

\*Girls Academy Website is the most accurate schedule

- i. GA East Regional
  1. Grand Park
  2. Westfield, IN
  3. Oct 13-16, 2023
  4. U13 & U14
- ii. GA Winter Showcase / Champions Cup
  1. Bell Bank Park
  2. Mesa, AZ
  3. Nov 30 - Dec 4, 2023
  4. U15 - U19
  5. U13 - U19 required for Champions Cup teams only
- iii. GA West Regional
  1. Bell Bank Park
  2. Mesa, AZ
  3. March 1-3, 2024
  4. U13 & U14
- iv. GA Champions Cup Finals
  1. IMG Academy
  2. Bradenton, FL
  3. March 7-12, 2024
  4. U13 - U19 required for Champions Cup teams only
    - a. 4 additional non-CC teams at U14, U15, U16, U17, & U19 will be invited for a showcase portion. Invites based on league and event performance.
- v. GA Spring Showcase
  1. Bryan Park
  2. Greensboro, NC
  3. April 18-22, 2024
  4. U15 - U19
- vi. GA Summer Showcase and Playoffs
  1. SilverLakes
  2. Norco, CA
  3. June 19-26, 2024
  4. U15 - U17 required for all clubs
  5. U13, U14, & U19 for Playoffs only
    - a. U13 and U19 Finals hosted here
- vii. GA Finals 2024
  1. Location TBD
  2. July 11-14, 2024

3. U14 - U17
  4. National Talent ID
    - a. July 10-12, 2024
- B. REGISTRATION
- i. All players on a GA roster must be GA registered players. This includes approved primary, secondary, remote and guest players for the GA.
- C. MINIMUM NUMBER OF COACHES
- i. If a club is traveling to an event with 3 or 4 teams, a minimum of 2 coaches must be present and available to coach.
  - ii. If a club is traveling to an event with 5+ teams, a minimum of 3 coaches must be present and available to coach
- D. THE GA NATIONAL EVENTS, PLAYOFFS AND SUMMER SHOWCASE 2023-24 SEASON
- i. National Event Attendance Expectations
    1. U13 -1 Regional Event, Summer Playoffs, but No Summer Showcase
    2. U14 -1 Regional Event, Summer Playoffs, but No Summer Showcase
    3. U15 - 1 National Event, plus Summer Playoffs or Summer Showcase
    4. U16 - 1 National Event, plus Summer Playoffs or Summer Showcase
    5. U17 - 1 National Event, plus Summer Playoffs or Summer Showcase
    6. U19 - 1 National Event, Summer Playoffs, but No Summer Showcase

**Note:** Teams not participating in an event for reasons other than weather, flight cancellations, or Acts of God will not be considered for a wildcard allocation.

- ii. GA Event Substitutions for Champions Cup (November/December and March), National Showcase (Winter, Spring, and Summer), and Regionals (East and West) – (U13-U19 age groups)
  1. Once a player is substituted in the second half of a Showcase game, they may re-enter the second half one time. If they are substituted in the second half again, then such player(s) may not re-enter the game.

2. The games shall permit a maximum of five (5) moments across both halves of a game with a maximum of three (3) moments per half.
  3. Halftime does not count as a moment.
  4. Re-entry in a second half will NOT apply to League games, Playoffs, or National Championships.
- iii. Playoffs & Summer Showcase
1. All U15, U16, and U17 GA teams must participate in the GA Summer Showcase, or GA Summer Playoffs upon qualification.
  2. All U13, U14, and U19 GA teams must participate in the GA Summer Playoffs upon qualification. There is no Showcase portion for these age groups.
    - a. U19 AQ teams that decline a playoff spot will be subject to:
      - i. A loss of 3 Champions Cup points
      - ii. \$5,000 fine for the club
  3. Teams shall be placed in either the GA Playoffs or Summer Showcase based upon their conference standings and national standings.
    - a. All conference matches and scores count towards the GA Conference Standings.
    - b. All conference, cross-conference and national event matches and scores count towards the GA National Standings.
- iv. Opting In to other events
1. At U13 & U14: Clubs may opt-in to additional regional events with one or both age groups.
  2. At U15 through U19: Clubs may opt-in to a second National Event with one or multiple age groups.
- v. Champions Cup
1. All Champions Cup teams must attend the Winter Showcase and Champions Cup Finals.
  2. Teams may opt-in to Regionals and Spring Showcase, but are not required to attend.
  3. Summer Playoffs / Showcase requirements apply as normal stated above.

**vi. Outside Competition**

1. As a member of the United States Soccer Federation, Inc., the Girls Academy and its members are, to the extent permitted by governing law, obliged to comply with the bylaws, policies, regulations, directives, and decisions of USSF and comply with requirements pertaining to interstate, nation and international competition and other competitions as required by the Federation. The GA does not restrict players from playing on another team within their club, or another program within their club. However, the GA encourages appropriate periodization for all players.

**vii. Event Fees**

1. All event fees for the 2022-2023 GA seasons will be \$1750 per team, with the exception of GA Finals (no fee).
  - a. All teams are expected to use Anthony Travel for housing.
  - b. If a team does not use Anthony Travel, registration will be \$2250 per team.
  - c. Does not apply to teams based close enough to an event so that they would not need hotel rooms.

**viii. Player Roster Tie for Summer Playoffs**

1. A player is permitted to play in the playoffs in a second age eligible age group, but ONLY after their playoff rostered team is eliminated from the specific competition round (all games must be completed) and the team they are moving to has advanced to the next round.
  - i. Example 1: A player is on the u16 team and does not advance out of group. After their u16 group stage ends, this player can move to another age eligible team in the NEXT round. They will NOT be able to play in another age's group stage.
  - ii. Example 2: A player is on the u16 team and loses their quarterfinal. This player can move to another age eligible team in the NEXT round (semi-finals). They will NOT be able to play in another age's quarterfinals.

**E. CHAMPIONS CUP**

- i. Updated Champions Cup can be viewed soon:
- ii. **(Coming Soon)** Champions Cup Qualification for 2024-2025 for U13s:
  1. full member clubs (top 2 clubs per conference)

2.        wildcards
- iii. **(Coming Soon)** Champions Cup Qualification for 2024-2025 for U14-U19s:
  1.        full member clubs (2 clubs per conference)
  2.        wildcards\*\*\*
- iv. Wildcards are the        highest finishing teams from non-full champions cup member clubs from the 2024 Summer playoffs from each age group at U13, U14, U15, U16, and U17. If multiple teams are tied while being eliminated in the same playoff round, tiebreakers will come into play in the following order:
  1. total points earned in playoffs
  2. goal differential
  3. goals for
  4. goals against
- v. If the 2023-2024 Champions cup team age group winner in U13-U17 from March 2024 event does not get a full member or wildcard spot, they will be given one of the four wildcard spots for the following year, leaving that age group with 3 wildcard spots coming from the playoffs.

F. AGE GROUP PLAYOFF OVERVIEWS AND STRUCTURES

- i. U13 Playoff Structure → [U13 Playoff Structure Link](#)
- ii. U14 - U17 Playoff Structure → [U14 Playoff Structure Link](#)
- iii. U15 - U17 Summer Showcase Structure → [U15-U17 Summer Showcase](#)
- iv. U19 Playoff Structure → [U19 Playoff Structure Link](#)