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I. **USA Ultimate Club Guidelines Overview**

This document defines the guidelines and regulations for the USA Ultimate Club Season. These guidelines cover the USA Ultimate Triple Crown Tour (TCT), including Regular Season and Postseason competition.

The contents of this document are important for players, team organizers, and tournament directors. The dates, registration and tournament rules and definitions of the TCT in this document supersede any other information.

There were several changes in the off-season that will be in effect for the 2020 season. These changes include, but are not limited to:

- Event Roster maximum has been changed from 27 to 26 for all regular season and postseason events.
- Gender minimums for any event roster have been changed from a minimum of four man-matching players and four woman-matching players to five man-matching players and five woman-matching players.
- The U.S. Open will utilize WFDF's Rule A for on-field Gender Ratios.
- International games at the U.S. Open will count towards a team's game count and will be incorporated into the rankings algorithm.
- Examples of appropriate and unacceptable jerseys have been added for further clarity.
- Select Flight Invite-West will now have 16 teams from each division invited.
- Updated to reflect the new "2020-2021 Official Rules of Ultimate" which will be used for all USA Ultimate competition. This applies to all USA Ultimate-owned and sanctioned events. The new rules are available at www.usultimate.org/rules in HTML and PDF formats, along with supporting documentation highlighting and explaining the changes from the 11th Edition. The new rules will be available in the USA Ultimate app and printed booklet by March 2020.

II. **USA Ultimate Triple Crown Tour Overview**

The Triple Crown Tour (TCT) for USA Ultimate's club men's, mixed and women's divisions enters its eighth season in 2020. TCT teams are divided into four (4) flights based on their performance in the previous year's TCT. Teams in each flight have different season requirements. Teams at all levels are encouraged to participate in the TCT's regular season and postseason. While there are incentives to compete in the regular season, registration will be open to any teams that want to compete in the Postseason Championship Series.

A. **Glossary**

1. **Triple Crown Tour (TCT)** – The TCT encompasses both the Regular Season and the Postseason for USA Ultimate club teams. The TCT includes Major Events run by USA Ultimate, such as the Pro-Elite Challenge, and any event which is a Sanctioned Regular Season or Postseason event. Winning the Triple Crown refers to winning the U.S. Open Club Championships, the Pro Championships and the National Championships.
2. **Regular Season** – All official TCT events and games between June 6 and August 30, including required flight-specific events, optional sanctioned regular season events or match-play games. The regular season will be extended through September 7 for all teams competing in the TCT Pro Championships.

3. Regular Season Games – All games at USA Ultimate Sanctioned Regular Season Events where a team's official roster and players met the roster eligibility rules will count for the regular season.
4. Regular Season Rankings – Regular season games will be factored into the USA Ultimate regular season rankings algorithm. Rankings will be published weekly starting July 29, with Final Regular Season Rankings posted at the end of the Regular Season. International games at the U.S. Open will count towards Regular Season Rankings. Games against International Teams at other events will not count towards Regular Season Rankings. Teams must play a minimum of 10 games to be included in the Final Regular Season Rankings.
5. Postseason Championship Series – The national tournament following the regular season comprises geographic-based qualifying events (Sectionals, Regionals) and concludes at the National Championships. This is the primary means of promotion and relegation between competition flights. Also referred to as the "Postseason."
6. National Championships – The third leg of the Triple Crown and the culminating event of the postseason and the TCT where the USA Ultimate National Championship winning teams are crowned in the men's, mixed and women's divisions. Also referred to as "Nationals."
7. Major TCT Event – The following tournaments are considered Major TCT Events: Pro-Elite Challenge, Select Flight Invite-West, Select Flight Invite-East, U.S. Open Club Championships, Elite-Select Challenge and Pro Championships.
8. Bid Allocation – Bid allocation from Sectionals to Regionals and from Regionals to Nationals include a combination of automatic bids and strength bids. Strength bids are allocated based on Final Regular Season Rankings.

B. Flight Overview

1. Pro Flight – Top eight teams (1st through 8th) based on performance at the prior year's National Championships.
2. Elite Flight – Next eight teams below the Pro Flight (9th through 16th), based on performance at the prior year's National Championships.
3. Select Flight – 32 teams. Next highest finishing four teams in each geographic region, after Pro and Elite teams, based on performance in the prior year's Regional Championships.
4. Top Select Teams – Select Flight teams that were the highest finishing Select team from each region (eight total) from the prior year's Regional Championships. The Top Select team is the team that lost the "game-to-go" to Nationals.
4. Classic Flight – All other teams participating in the Regular Season or Postseason of the TCT.

C. Regular Season Overview

1. Timeline – The Regular Season will run from June 6 through August 30, 2020 (Note: the Regular Season will be extended through September 7, 2020 for all teams participating in the TCT Pro Championships).
2. Regular Season Registration – Teams competing at Sanctioned Regular Season Events will be required to register their team and submit their event roster for that event through the USA Ultimate online rosters system by **5pm MDT on the Wednesday prior to the event**.
3. Game Length Minimums – All games at sanctioned USA Ultimate events must meet the minimum point and time-based requirements (each game must have been initially set to be, at minimum, to 11 points and 60 minutes in length).
 - a. NEVER report an inaccurate score. Doing so will result in game disqualifications and other appropriate sanctions.

- i. If a game is a forfeiture, do NOT put the score in as 13-0 or 15-0. You must inform the TD and report a W/F on the USA Ultimate reporting app.
- ii. As a general rule, USA Ultimate prohibits the forfeiting of scheduled games during the regular season. Please see section V.B.11. Forfeit Rules for more information.
- b. Games under the aforementioned minimums are subject to USA Ultimate and Competition Working Group review
- c. Requests to shorten any game must be approved by the event manager/TD and should still meet the minimum requirements mentioned above.

D. Postseason Championship Series Overview

1. The USA Ultimate Postseason Championship Series will run from September 12 through October 25, 2020.

a. **Sectionals** will be held on September 12-13, 2020. Bids to host Sectionals are due to Regional Coordinators by May 31, with dates and locations announced by June 30. Check the USA Ultimate website for dates and locations. Contact your Sectional Coordinator for additional information.

To host a sectional event please fill out this document and email to the appropriate Sectional Coordinator(s) AND the Club Competition Manager, Carolina (carolina@hq.usultimate.org)

b. **Regionals** will be held on September 26-27, 2020. Bids to host are due by March 31, with dates and locations announced by April 30. Check the USA Ultimate website for dates and locations. Contact your Regional Coordinator for additional information.

To host a Regional event please fill out this form and email to the appropriate Regional Coordinator(s) AND the Club Competition Manager, Carolina (carolina@hq.usultimate.org)

Due to the variety of field reservation policies across the country, bids may be accepted on a rolling basis. If you intend to bid for Sectionals or Regionals, please notify your appropriate Sectional Coordinator or Regional Coordinator as soon as possible to ensure your bid is considered.

c. The USA Ultimate National Championships will be held October 22-25, 2020 at the Surf Cup Sports Park in San Diego, California.

2. Series Team Registration Deadline – In order to participate in the Postseason, teams must be created via the online rostering system, or rolled over from the previous year and registered for their first Postseason event with a valid event roster (10 player minimum) by **Friday, August 28 at 5pm MDT/7pm EDT. This deadline is the same for all teams, including teams advancing directly to Regionals.** Teams eligible to advance directly to Regionals will be contacted by their respective National Director and invited to the Regionals event directly. They should not register for Sectionals.

Using the links below, Team Managers can create their team in the online rostering system, register their team for its first Postseason event, add players to the team's personnel and move Postseason players from the team personnel the team's Postseason event roster:

- i. [Create a Team and Add Personnel](#)
- ii. [Event Registration and Rostering Participants](#)

3. Roster Additions – After the August 28 team registration deadline, teams can make event roster adjustments until the final event roster deadline for the Postseason (Wednesday, September 9 at 5pm MDT/7pm EDT). Teams must maintain a minimum of 10 players on its event roster and can have a maximum of 26 players on its event roster.

After the Final Postseason Roster Deadline on September 9th, teams may not add anyone to the roster. This includes ALL teams, including those who will skip Sectionals and start at Regionals. **All players who may compete with you at Sectionals, Regionals or Nationals must be on your Final Postseason Roster by September 9th.**

Within the 26 player roster maximum, Pro, Elite and Top Select teams may add a maximum of three players to their Postseason Roster that did not participate in a Sanctioned Regular Season Event with the team.

4. Series Progression -



To support roster consistency between the Regular Season and Postseason, bid allocations for Select and Classic teams will only count for ranked teams that bring at least 50% of their roster into the Postseason. If a team does not reach the 50% threshold, the team will still be allowed to compete in the Postseason Series, but the earned bid will be forfeited and redistributed to the region with the next highest ranked team.

5. Bid Allocation - Bid allocation from Sectionals to Regionals includes a combination of automatic bids and strength bids (based on regular season rankings through Sunday, August 30). Bid allocation from Regionals to Nationals includes a combination of automatic bids (one per region) and eight strength bids (based on final regular season rankings through Monday, September 7).

III. **Events**

A. **Regular Season Events**

1. Major TCT Events

a. For event requirements and wait list criteria [click here](#).

Event	Date	Location	Participants
Pro-Elite Challenge [PEC Wait List]	July 11-12	Aurora, CO	16 teams - Bottom 4 Pro Flight teams (required) - Bid priority to Pro and Elite Flight teams followed by Select, then Classic flight teams.
Select Flight Invite-West [SFI Wait List]	July 11-12	Norco, CA	16 Teams - Elite bids (4): Bid priority to Elite teams followed by Pro, Select, and then Classic Flight teams. - Select bids (8): Bid priority to highest ranked Select, then Classic Flight teams
Select Flight Invite-East [SFI Wait List]	July 25-26	Columbus, Ohio	16 Teams - Elite bids (4): Bid priority to Elite teams followed by Pro, Select, and then Classic Flight teams. - Select bids (8): Bid priority to highest ranked Select, then Classic Flight teams

U.S. Open Club Championships [USOCC Wait List]	July 31 - August 2	Blaine, MN	12 teams - Top 4 Pro Flight teams (required) - Bid priority to Bottom 4 Pro Flight teams, followed by Elite Flight teams, then Select Flight teams. - Up to four non-TCT international teams
Elite-Select Challenge [ESC Wait List]	August 22-23	Lebanon, OH	16 Teams - 8 Elite Flight teams (required) - 8 Select bids: Bid priority to Select, followed by Pro, then Classic flight teams.
Pro Championships [Pro Championships Wait List]	September 5-7	Boulder, CO	10 teams - First 8 Bids: Bid priority to Pro Flight teams followed by Elite and then Select - Final 2 Wild Card bids: Bid priority to finalists of Pro-Elite Challenge, followed by next highest placing teams.

2. Sanctioned Regular Season Events – Multiple [sanctioned events throughout the country](#) where teams from any flight can participate in the regular season and have their results count towards the regular season rankings. [Click here for more information on event sanctioning.](#)

3. Sanctioned Match Play – Individual games may be sanctioned at the discretion of USA Ultimate in order to provide flexibility for teams in planning their seasons and scheduling playing opportunities. Match play sanctioning may require earlier sanctioning application deadlines, will be subject to the review of USA Ultimate staff, and may require additional oversight and/or structure to ensure the integrity of the competition. [Click here for more information on event sanctioning.](#)

B. Postseason Championship Series Events

1. Sectional Championships

a. All Select and Classic Flight teams, including any new teams, must start the Postseason at Sectionals. Pro and Elite Flight teams may receive a bye to Regionals if they qualify. Teams participating in Sectionals must have met all team and player requirements, including having all players with a current membership and signed waiver. There is no additional qualifying process for Sectionals.

b. Bids to Regionals - **MEN'S AND MIXED DIVISIONS** - Regional bids will be allocated to sections as outlined below using a combination of automatic and strength bids. Initial Sectional bid allocations to Regionals will be announced following the conclusion of the Regular Season. Initial Sectional bid allocations to Regionals will be confirmed and announced by Friday, September 4. Any changes (teams dropping, rankings issues) may impact bid allocations until the Final Bid Allocation on Tuesday, September 8. It is possible for Sectional bid allocations to change due to team withdrawals between the Initial and Final Bid Allocation window. Bids will be finalized after that date.

i. Pro and Elite bids – The number of bids available to Regionals per the bid process below will be reduced by the number of Pro and Elite teams receiving a bye to Regionals. For example, in a 12-team regional championship event that includes two Pro or Elite teams using a bye to regionals, there will be 10 bids remaining for distribution to the sections in that region.

ii. Auto bids - The number of auto bids per region is equal to 50% of the total bids available after regional scaling and Pro/Elite byes are accounted for. If there are an odd number of bids, there will be one more auto bid than strength bids. All sections with at least one team registered for the Postseason will receive at least one auto bid to Regionals. Regional auto bids will be awarded first to the section with greatest team count based on the Team Registration Deadline. The next bid will be awarded to the section with the second highest team count and so on until all auto bids have been awarded.

iii. Strength bids – The number of strength bids per section is equal to 50% of the total bids available after regional scaling and Pro/Elite byes are accounted for. If there are an odd number of bids, there will be one more auto bid than strength bids.

- Team Strength Bids - Team Strength bids to Regionals will be awarded to the section with the "next" highest ranked team that is participating in the postseason, based on regular season rankings for results through Sunday, August 30, where "next" describes one more bid than the section has already been awarded up to that point. (For example: a section with four bids and a section with two bids will compare their fifth and third ranked teams, respectively, for a Team Strength Bid).

- Sections may earn more than one Team Strength Bid. All strength bids will be awarded as Team Strength Bids unless the region does not have enough ranked teams.

- Sectional Strength Bids - If all ranked teams have been assigned Strength Bids and there are still additional bids to be assigned, average power rating of the ranked teams who are participating in the Postseason will be considered.

iv. Wait List Bids – If, after all Sectionals have been completed, a team turns down its bid to Regionals, the bid will be offered to another team from the region as follows:

- The next highest finishing, non-qualifying team from each section will be compared to one another. The team with the highest final regular season ranking will be awarded the next bid. This process will be repeated until all bids have been awarded.
- If the next highest finishing, non-qualifying team in a section is an unranked team, then that team will take on the ranking of the next highest finishing ranked team below it. If there are no ranked teams left in a section, wait list bids will be awarded to teams from other sections.
- If bids are still available and there are only unranked teams in the section, bids will be awarded in order of average section strength (highest to lowest) until all bids have been awarded.
- If a team drops out less than one week prior to the tournament, the Regional Coordinator may accelerate the above process by shortening response times and immediately contacting all potential replacement teams.
- If the vacant bid has not been filled three days prior to the tournament, the Regional Coordinator may award the bid or reduce the size of regionals at his/her discretion with the approval of the division's National Director.

c. Bids to Regionals - **WOMEN'S DIVISION** - In effort to provide more valuable playing opportunities for women's division teams, for the women's division in regions with up to 16 teams, all teams will be invited to the Regional Tournament. For regions with more than 16 teams, 16 teams will be invited using the bid allocation formulas as used in the other divisions.

d. USA Ultimate reserves the right, based on the number of teams registered in a section, to combine sections or require teams to migrate to another section.

2. Regional Championships

a. Pro and Elite Flight teams may receive a bye to Regionals provided they participate in two Major TCT events. The two events comprise one required event (based on the team's flight) and one optional Major TCT event. All other teams, including new teams must qualify for Regionals through Sectionals.

b. Regional Event Scaling - **MEN'S AND MIXED DIVISIONS ONLY** - The size of regional events will be based on the number of teams in a region that meet the Postseason team registration deadline.

Size of Regionals	Number of Registered Teams
8 teams	16 or fewer teams

10 teams	17-20 teams
12 teams	21-24 teams
16 teams	25 or more teams

c. **WOMEN'S DIVISION** - All teams will be invited to the Regional Tournament in regions with 16 or fewer teams. Regions with more than 16 teams will have 16 bids allocated as described in section III.B.1.b. (Bids to Regionals) of these guidelines.

d. Bids to Nationals - 16 bids will be available in each of the men's, mixed and women's divisions. Bids will be allocated to regions as outlined below using a combination of automatic and strength bids.

i. Auto Bids

- Each region will receive one automatic bid.

ii. Strength Bids – After auto bids have been awarded, remaining bids will be based on the ranking of teams in each region in the final Regular Season Rankings, as outlined below:

- Team Strength - All Strength Bids will be awarded to regions with the "next" highest ranked team that is participating in the postseason, where "next" describes one more bid than the region has already been awarded up to that point. For example, a region with two bids and a region with three bids will compare their third and fourth ranked teams, respectively, for a Team Strength Bid.

- A region may earn multiple Team Strength Bids.

3. National Championships

a. 16 teams representing eight regions will compete for the USA Ultimate National Championship in the men's, mixed and women's divisions.

b. Placement at Nationals determines promotion and relegation between the Pro and Elite Flights for the following Club Season.

C. Prize Money

1. Prize money will be awarded in recognition of competitive excellence and in order to help offset some costs for teams that are invested in and committed to the TCT season.

2. For each division, prize money will be awarded to each of the following:

a. Pro-Elite Challenge - \$750 (1st Place)

b. U.S. Open Club Championships - \$2,000 (1st place) and \$1,000 (2nd Place)

- c. Elite-Select Challenge - \$500 (1st place)
 - d. Pro Championships - \$1,500 (1st place) and \$500 (2nd place)
 - e. National Championship - \$2,000 (1st place) and \$1,000 (2nd place)
 - f. Triple Crown (wins U.S. Open Club Championships, Pro Championships and Nationals) - \$2,000
3. Prize money amounts and ability to distribute beyond winning teams will be dependent on the ability to generate additional revenue through new revenue streams and sponsorships associated with the Triple Crown Tour.

IV. **Registration Guidelines**

A. **Regular Season Registration**

1. Regular Season Events – Any Sanctioned Regular Season Event between June 6 and August 30, with the addition of the Pro Championship will count towards the regular season rankings and results unless otherwise pre-approved. All attending teams will be considered regular season teams unless otherwise pre-approved. Contact sanctioning@usultimate.org with any questions.

- a. USA Ultimate Sanctioned Regular Season Events will be listed in the online [USA Ultimate event calendar](#).

2. Sanctioned Event Requirements – USA Ultimate-sanctioned event organizers will be required to do the following:

- a. Submit or verify the results of games through the USA Ultimate's online score reporting system.
- b. Comply with all requirements for USA Ultimate-sanctioned event organizers outlined in the USA Ultimate Tournament Director's Certification Program and the sanctioned event agreement.

USA Ultimate will be progressively increasing the minimum standards which tournaments/events will be required to meet to receive sanctioning approval. USA Ultimate will not sanction an event if it believes that the event or event organizer is not aligned with the best interests of the sport, the Triple Crown Tour, other USA Ultimate programs or the mission and policies of USA Ultimate.

3. Team Registration Requirements – All teams that compete in the regular season must submit an online event roster by the event-specific, rolling deadlines outlined below. Teams are required to do the following:

- a. Notify the event organizer of their intention to compete in the event, acknowledge understanding that the team will be considered a regular season team, and receive confirmation that the team has received a bid to the event.
- b. Once confirmed, use the online rostering system to submit the team's event roster for the event.

c. Complete team's event roster by 5pm MDT on the Wednesday prior to the event.

d. USA Ultimate membership dues and individual waivers must be submitted before a player can be added to an event roster. Players must be added to the event roster by 5pm MDT on the Wednesday prior to the event in order to participate.

i. Any player found to play in a sanctioned event without being on a team roster will face sanctions along with any other culpable parties, which could include but is not limited to the Team Manager, other teammates, other teams, and the tournament organizers.

5. Flight-specific Registration Requirements

Flights/Teams/Events	Deadlines	Requirement
Pro/Elite	March 15	Commit to required TCT Regular Season events
Top Select	March 29	Commit to required TCT Regular Season events
Select	March 29	Accept or decline Select Flight status for Regular Season and commit to TCT Regular Season Events
TCT lineups finalized	April 15	All teams confirmed for TCT events
Pro/Elite/Top Select	June 1	Minimum (14) players on team personnel list in online rostering system
Pro-Elite Challenge	July 8	Final event roster due in online rostering system
Select Flight Invite-West	July 8	Final event roster due in online rostering system
U.S. Open Club Championships	July 6	Team Info Forms and final event roster due in online rostering system

Select Flight Invite-East	July 22	Final event roster due in online rostering system
Elite-Select Challenge	August 19	Final event roster due in online rostering system
Pro Championships	September 2	Final event roster due in online rostering system
All other Regular Season events	Wednesday (5pm MDT) prior to specific event	Final event roster due in online rostering system

a. Pro and Elite Flights

i. Teams in the Pro Flight are required to compete in one flight-specific regular season event: U.S. Open Club Championships (Pro teams 1-4) or Pro-Elite Challenge (Pro teams 5-8) as well as 10 regular season games in order to be eligible for the Postseason. Teams in the Elite Flight are required to compete in the Elite-Select Challenge as well as 10 regular season games in order to be eligible for the Postseason.

ii. Any team that commits to a Major TCT event is required to compete in that event in order to be eligible for the Postseason, unless otherwise approved as described under Section e. Sanctions below.

iii. Any team that drops from a Major TCT event after the drop deadline will be subject to a fine described under Section e. Sanctions below.

b. Select Flight

i. Top Select teams are required to compete in one flight-specific regular season event (Elite-Select Challenge, Select Flight Invite-West, or Select Flight Invite-East) as well as 10 regular season games in order to be eligible for the postseason.

ii. All other Select Flight teams (excluding Top Select teams) that opt out of the Select Flight remain eligible for the postseason.

iii. Any team that drops from a Major TCT event after the drop deadline will be subject to a fine described under Section e. Sanctions below.

c. Classic Flight

i. All teams that did not qualify for the Pro, Elite or Select flights are Classic Flight teams. This includes teams that are new in 2020.

ii. Classic Flight teams must register for regular season events by the deadlines outlined in the [Team Registration Requirements](#) section above.

iii. Classic Flight teams that do not participate in the regular season are eligible for the postseason.

iv. Any team that drops from a Major TCT event after the drop deadline will be subject to a fine described under Section e. Sanctions below.

d. Flight Adjustments

i. If vacancies occur in the Pro or Elite Flights after the March 29 deadline, USA Ultimate will target replacing those vacancies by April 12.

ii. If vacancies occur in the Select Flight after the April 12 deadline, USA Ultimate will target replacing those vacancies by May 10. Vacancies which remain after May 10 may or may not be filled at the discretion of USA Ultimate.

e. Sanctions

Withdrawing from TCT Events -

Teams cannot withdraw from the U.S. Open Club Championships, Elite-Select challenge, Pro-Elite Challenge, Select Flight Invite or Pro Flight Finale after April 15, 2020, without approval from their National Director and the USA Ultimate Manager of Competition and National Team Programs (carolina@hq.usultimate.org).

i. Penalties

Withdrawing from Major TCT events has real implications on event quality, negatively impacting the event due to the challenges of finding replacement teams on short notice. The following sanctions will be applied to teams that withdraw from Major TCT events, with a sliding scale for penalties relative to the time in which a team withdraws from a Major TCT event:

- Upon acceptance of bid to event: \$250 + tournament fee
- Within two months of the event: \$500 + tournament fee
- Within one month of the event: \$750 + tournament fee

The tournament fee will be refunded if a replacement team is found.

Should a team withdraw without approval, USA Ultimate reserves the right to forfeit the team's results and disqualify the team. For more information see Sanctions.

6. Regular Season Eligibility

a. Teams participating in Regular Season games must do so only with players who are on their official event roster and must comply with both the player and roster guidelines as outlined below.

b. Roster Changes - To allow teams some leeway in determining their final roster, while preserving the integrity of the Regular Season rankings by preventing artificial manipulation of rosters, the following rules will apply to roster changes.

i. Players may play for a team at a Sanctioned Regular Season Event, then compete for a different team at a subsequent regular season event, with the following limitation:

ii. Once a player has played on a team at a Sanctioned Regular Season Event, they are not eligible to return to that team after they have participated in a Sanctioned Regular Season Event with another team in the men's, mixed or women's divisions.

iii. "Participation" for the purposes of this rule is defined as playing at an event or a player being included on a team's event roster for an event.

c. Geographic Guidelines

i. At least 50% of the players on a team's roster must reside in the section in which that team will compete. Pro and Elite teams receiving byes to Regionals must meet this standard for the section in which they would normally compete.

ii. At least 75% of the players on a team's Season Roster must reside in the region in which that team will compete.

iii. A team can roster no more than five out of region players at any Regular Season Event in which the team will be competing. Additionally, a team may not roster more than 7 out of region players during the Regular Season.

iv. "Residence" is defined as meeting both of the below criteria:

- Location where the person is living for the majority of September and October, and
- Location where the person is living for the majority of either the three months prior to September 1 or immediately following October 31.

v. If the above definition means that a player does not have a region as their "residence", then the player is considered to be an out-of-region player and counts towards a team's out-of-region limits (maximum of five out-of-region players and no more than 25% of the roster).

vi. If a regional boundary divides a metropolitan area, a team based in that metropolitan area may request an exception for players living in that metropolitan area to count as in-region for that team. In order for an exception to be granted, a player and team must establish that the player is part of the local community in which the team is based. In order for teams to be in compliance with the geographic guidelines throughout the season, players must receive exception approval prior to participation with the team at a regular season event. To request this exception, email your National Director and copy the Manager of Competition and National Team Programs (carolina@hq.usultimate.org).

vii. Sectional and Regional boundaries are available on the USA Ultimate [website](#).

d. Roster Maximums and Minimums

i. Maximums –

• Pro, Elite, and Top Select Flight teams:

- Pro, Elite and Top Select Flight teams may roster a maximum of 30 total individual players on regular season event rosters for the entirety of the regular season.

- Pro, Elite and Top Select Flight teams may roster a maximum of 26 players on any given regular season event roster.

• All other teams (below the Top Select designation; Select and Classic Flight teams):

- Do not have a cap on the number of players that can be used for the entirety of the regular season on event rosters.

- May roster a maximum of 26 players on any given regular season event roster.

ii. Minimums

• **Pro-Elite Challenge (PEC) - July 11-12, 2020**

○ Men's teams:

All teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players.

○ Mixed teams:

All teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players; with a minimum of six (6) woman-matching and six (6) man-matching players.

○ Women's teams:

Pro and Elite Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 18 players.

Select and Classic Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 16 players.

• **Select Flight Invite-West (SFI-West) - July 11-12, 2020**
Select Flight Invite-East (SFI-East) - July 25-26, 2020

○ Men's teams:

Pro and Elite Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players for any major TCT event.

Top Select Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players for any major TCT event.

All other Select and Classic Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 10 players.

- Mixed teams:

Pro, Elite, and Top Select Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players; with a minimum of six (6) woman-matching and six (6) man-matching players.

All other Select and Classic Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 10 players; with a minimum of four (4) woman-matching and four (4) man-matching players.

- Women's teams:

Pro and Elite Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 18 players for any major TCT event.

Top Select Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 16 players for any major TCT event.

All other Select and Classic Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 10 players.

- **U.S. Open Club Championships (USOCC) - July 31-August 2, 2020**

- Men's teams:

All teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players.

- Mixed teams:

All teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players; with a minimum of six (6) woman-matching and six (6) man-matching players.

- Women's teams:

Pro and Elite Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 18 players.

Select and Classic Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 16 players.

- **Elite-Select Challenge (ESC) - August 22-23, 2020**

- Men's teams:

All teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players.

- Mixed teams:

All teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players; with a minimum of six (6) woman-matching and six (6) man-matching players.

- Women's teams:

Pro and Elite Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 18 players.

Select and Classic Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 16 players.

- **Pro Championships - September 5-7, 2020**

- Men's teams:

All teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players.

- Mixed teams:

All teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 20 players; with a minimum of six (6) woman-matching and six (6) man-matching players.

- Women's teams:

Pro and Elite Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 18 players.

Select and Classic Flight teams – must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 16 players.

- **All other regular season events**

- All teams must roster and dress (on site) a minimum of 10 players. Mixed teams must roster and dress a minimum of five (5) woman-matching players and five (5) man-matching players.

iii. Competition Minimums:

Competition Minimums are set for the safety of our teams. A team must have seven players to start a game, and a team must have five to continue playing at any point. If a team cannot field five players, the game is a forfeit.

iv. Sanctions:

Minimum roster number violations – USA Ultimate reserves the right to sanction teams that fail to meet the roster minimums for designated TCT events. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, disqualification from the regular season and/or postseason, ranking and/or bid allocation penalties, forfeiture of game results, team and/or player/coach suspensions, forfeiture of bye to regionals, lowering of postseason series roster cap, financial penalties and team and/or player conduct hearings. Minimum roster number violations will be dealt with on a case by case basis, taking into account all pertinent facts and perspectives.

v. Exceptions:

The goal of the roster minimum requirements is to ensure consistent team representation at TCT events throughout the regular season. Exceptions to roster minimums may be considered for special circumstances, such as national team conflicts, small roster sizes, or other unforeseen issues. Please contact carolina@hq.usultimate.org by March 29, 2020 to request an exception to the roster minimum requirements.

e. Gender Division Eligibility

i. Male players are eligible to compete in the men's and mixed divisions.

ii. Female players are eligible to compete in the men's, mixed and women's divisions.

iii. On-field gender ratio rules for the mixed division are described in the Mixed Division Gender Ratio section of the Competition Guidelines.

iv. The eligibility of transgender athletes will be governed by the USA Ultimate Policy on Transgender Athletes. Contact USA Ultimate HQ for more information.

f. Teams that are found to have violated the letter or spirit of these rules or whose behavior undermines the competition structure (e.g. misrepresenting the composition of a team at a specific event, misrepresenting the composition of a team over the course of the season, intentionally playing with ineligible players) will be subject to ramifications as outlined in "Violations and Sanctions." Roster violations should be reported to the Manager of Competition and National Team Programs at carolina@hq.usultimate.org.

B. Postseason Championship Series Registration Guidelines

1. Team Registration Requirements

a. Team Registration Deadline

i. Teams must register for the postseason via the online rostering system by August 28, 2020 (by 5pm MDT/7pm EDT). **This date is the same for all teams regardless of flight or bye.**

- Select and Classic Flight teams must register for their appropriate sectional event.
- Pro and Elite Flight teams that have met the requirements to earn a bye to Regionals and intend to advance directly to Regionals must accept their invitation to their regional event by August 28, 2020 (by 5pm MDT/7pm EDT). Otherwise they should contact their National Division Director to decline their bye and register for their appropriate sectional event by the August 28 5pm MDT deadline.

ii. All teams should contact their Sectional or Regional Coordinator before the Team Registration Deadline to confirm their participation in Sectionals.

[Coordinator contact info](#) can be found on the USA Ultimate website.

iii. For the purposes of event logistics, tournament directors may work with USA Ultimate coordinators to impose a deadline by which teams must decide whether they will attend the tournament. This deadline may be associated with submission of a tournament entry fee. Tournament Directors may keep entry fees from teams that pull out of the tournament beyond a certain date, provided the date and fee are reasonable (for instance, the date cannot be before the Team Registration Deadline), were approved by the National Division Director and were communicated to the teams ahead of time. Early tournament registration dates will be documented on the event listing on the USA Ultimate website. Any deadline imposed by a coordinator or tournament director that would restrict access to the tournament for teams that would otherwise be considered eligible must be announced well in advance and must be approved by the National Division Director.

b. Postseason Event-Roster Deadline

i. Event rosters must be finalized, via the online rostering system, by the Wednesday prior to Sectionals (Wednesday, September 9 at 5pm MDT/7pm EDT).

- **Pro and Elite Flight teams who will advance directly to Regionals must also submit their final event roster for the postseason via the online rostering system by Wednesday, September 9 at 5pm MDT/7pm EDT.**

ii. A team may add eligible players, up to a maximum of 26 total, to their event roster in between the August 28 Team Registration Deadline and the Postseason Event-Roster Deadline on September 9.

- Pro, Elite and Top Select teams may have a maximum of 26 players on their postseason event roster, but can only add a maximum of three players to their postseason event roster that did not participate in a regular season event with the team.
- Select and Classic Flight teams do not have limitations on their roster composition. However, if 50% of the team did not compete at a Sanctioned Regular Season Event, any ranking earned will not count for bid allocation. See note in [Series Progression](#).

iii. Roster Omissions - If a player has been accidentally omitted from a team's postseason event roster or requires additional clarification after the roster deadline, please contact carolina@hq.usultimate.org to submit an appeal. Please note that this process is not for teams that miss the Team Registration Deadline. The deadline for submitting an appeal (including requested documentation) is **Noon (12:00 PM)** MDT on Friday, September 11, 2020.

Appeals for late or incorrect registration of players may or may not be granted. Fees and/or fines may be associated with certain appeals. Players cannot be added after sectionals for a regionals roster, or after regionals for a nationals roster.

c. School Based Extensions

i. School based teams who start their fall academic term on August 19 or later are eligible for a roster deadline extension.

ii. To receive the School Based Extension the team must complete the following two steps by August 28:

- Use the online rostering system to submit a partial roster for their sectional event. A partial roster can include as few as one name, and can be a player or team manager; *and*
- Email carolina@hq.usultimate.org (and copy the appropriate Sectional Coordinator) to request an extension. The email should include information about the official start of the academic term.

iii. By the Final Event Roster Deadline (September 9 at 5pm MDT), the team's full postseason event roster must be entered into the online rostering system. The school based extension teams are exempt from the 10 player minimum required for initial Team Registration. However, they must meet the 10 player minimum by the Final Event Roster Deadline. If a team is not registered and valid by that deadline, it will be dropped from the event.

d. If prior to any postseason event, a team knows it will be unable to complete the event, the team will be considered ineligible to participate in the event. Appeals may be made to the National Division Director through the Sectional Coordinator or Regional Coordinator. Decisions on appeals will be based on the potential impact to the tournament (e.g. integrity of the competition, game schedule, quality of the event, etc.).

e. Teams should make a copy of its event roster for its records and bring a copy to all postseason events in case it needs to be referenced.

2. Postseason Eligibility

a. Teams participating in postseason games must do so only with players who are on their official event roster.

b. No player may be on more than one postseason event roster, either within the same division or across divisions.

c. Geographic Guidelines

- i. At least 50% of the players on a team's event roster must reside in the section in which that team will compete. Pro and Elite Flight teams must meet this standard for the section in which they would normally compete.
- ii. At least 75% of the players on a team's Postseason Event Roster must reside in the region in which that team will compete.
- iii. No more than five players may reside outside the region in which the team will be competing for the Series.
- iv. "Residence" is defined as meeting both of the below criteria:
 - Location where the person is living for the majority of September and October, and
 - Location where the person is living for the majority of either the three months prior to September 1 or immediately following October 31.
- v. If the above definition means that a player does not have a region as their "residence", then the player is considered to be an out-of-region player and counts towards a team's out-of-region limits (maximum of five out-of-region players and no more than 25% of the roster).
- vi. If a regional boundary divides a metropolitan area, a team based in that metropolitan area may request an exception for players living in that metropolitan area to count as in-region for that team. In order for an exception to be granted, a player and team must establish that the player is part of the local community in which the team is based. In order for teams to be in compliance with the geographic guidelines throughout the season, players must receive exception approval prior to participation with the team at a regular season event. To request this exception, email carolina@hq.usultimate.org.
- vii. Sectional and Regional boundaries are available on the USA Ultimate [website](#).

d. Roster Maximums and Minimums

- i. Maximums – Teams may have a maximum of 26 players on their postseason event roster.
 - Pro, Elite and Top Select teams - may add a maximum of three players to their postseason event roster that did not participate in a regular season event with the team).
- ii. Minimums – Teams must have a minimum of 10 players on their postseason event roster.
 - For mixed teams, the event roster must include at least five woman-matching and five man-matching players.
- iii. Competition Minimums – Competition Minimums are set for the safety of our teams. A team must have seven players to start a game, and a team must have

five to continue playing at any point. If a team cannot field five players, the game is a forfeit.

e. Gender Division Eligibility

i. Male players are eligible to compete in the men's and mixed divisions.

ii. Female players are eligible to compete in the men's, mixed and women's divisions.

iii. On-field gender ratio rules for the mixed division are described in the [Mixed Division Gender Ratio](#) section of the Competition Guidelines.

iv. The eligibility of transgender athletes will be governed by the [USA Ultimate Policy on Transgender Athletes](#). Contact USA Ultimate HQ for more information.

f. Minor (Under 18) Player Info -

i. Minors participating in the Postseason Championship Series must have the appropriate forms completed prior to participation (waiver, medical release) and meet the chaperone requirement. A chaperone must be named on the roster. The medical release form is the responsibility of the chaperone; it must be brought to each postseason event and kept on hand by the chaperone. This form will allow medical personnel to treat an injured minor without a parent/guardian having to be present. Without this form a doctor might not treat an injured minor. Visit the [membership page](#) for access to the required registration forms for minors.P

g. Teams that are found to have violated the letter or spirit of these rules or whose behavior undermines the competition structure (e.g. misrepresenting the composition of a team at a specific event, misrepresenting the composition of a team over the course of the season, intentionally playing with ineligible players) will be subject to ramifications as outlined in the USA Ultimate Triple Crown Tour Guidelines section entitled "Violations and Sanctions." Roster violations should be reported to the Manager of Competition and National Team Programs at carolina@hq.usultimate.org.

V. **Competition Guidelines**

A. **Spirit of the Game**

1. Ultimate has traditionally relied upon a spirit of sportsmanship which places the responsibility for fair play on the player. Highly competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of the bond of mutual respect between players, the well-being of a fellow player, adherence to the agreed-upon rules of the game, or the basic joy of play. Protection of these vital elements serves to eliminate adverse conduct from the ultimate field. Such actions as taunting of opposing players, dangerous aggression, intentional fouling, or other 'win at all costs' behavior are contrary to the Spirit of the Game and must be avoided by all players.

2. For more information on Spirit of the Game, click [here](#).

B. **Regular Season and Postseason Competition Guidelines**

1. [Competition Authority](#)

a. Regular Season

i. Major TCT Events – Event formats, game rules, seeding and the use of Observers will be determined by USA Ultimate.

ii. All other Sanctioned Regular Season Events –

- Event formats, game rules, seeding and the use of Observers are all at the discretion of the regular season event organizers, provided they meet event guidelines outlined in the USA Ultimate sanctioned-event agreement and in these guidelines as specified below.

b. Postseason – All aspects of competition will be determined by USA Ultimate, including but not limited to registration, eligibility, event formats, game rules, seeding and the use of Observers.

2. Team Selection Requirements for Events

a. Regular Season

i. Major TCT events – USA Ultimate will determine the field of teams.

ii. All other Sanctioned Regular Season Events – Organizers may invite teams from any flight.

b. Postseason – Eligible teams register for the postseason in their appropriate section (Select, Classic) or region (Pro, Elite). Advancement to Regionals and Nationals follows the rules laid out in the "Events" section of these guidelines.

3. Regular Season Rankings

a. The Regular Season Rankings are used to determine bid allocations for the Postseason. The rankings will be based on games played between eligible teams at Sanctioned Regular Season Events.

b. The regular season rankings algorithm will be run, and the rankings will be published weekly starting July 29, 2020.

c. Teams must compete in a minimum of 10 regular season games to be included in the Final Regular Season Rankings, which impact bid allocation to Regionals and Nationals

d. To support roster consistency between the regular season and postseason for Classic and Select Flight teams, at least 50% of a team's postseason roster must consist of players that competed for the team during the regular season for the team's regular season ranking to count in the postseason bid allocations.

e. Rankings Eligibility

i. Regular season rankings are tentative, pending eligibility verification. At the end of the regular season, any eligibility-based adjustments will be made and included in the final regular season rankings.

ii. Results of sanctioned regular season events will not count if:

- The event does not meet the USA Ultimate definition of ultimate.
- The competition rules of the event designate the number of players on the field for a team to be any number other than seven.
- Games do not meet the minimum point and time-based requirements (each game must have been initially set to be, at minimum, to 11 points and 60 minutes in length).
- An inaccurate score is reported.

⇒ Games that are suspended or modified due to inclement weather or other unavoidable reason may be counted only if a team has reached at least half the minimum point total or half the minimum game length, at the discretion of USA Ultimate.

iii. If a team competes in a sanctioned regular season event with ineligible players (i.e., with players that were not on the team's event roster), the team will be treated as ineligible and its results will not count for the event. Any eligible opposing team that competes against the ineligible team at the event will receive credit for competing in the game (i.e., game will be included in the team's regular season game count), but the results of the game will not be included in the regular season rankings.

iv. USA Ultimate reserves the right to disallow regular season results for reasons not outlined in these guidelines, if they are determined not to be in line with the goals of the USA Ultimate Triple Crown Tour or the mission and policies of USA Ultimate.

Teams are not allowed to split to add additional teams to an event. If an event is in need of another team, the event organizer must find an additional team rather than split an existing team into multiple teams. Deliberate misrepresentation of a team registered for the regular season in order to influence regular season rankings will be considered a roster violation and may be subject to ramifications as outlined in the section titled "Violations and Sanctions." In addition to those sanctions, if such deliberate misrepresentation of a team is discovered, USA Ultimate reserves the right to assign a game result to whichever team it deems appropriate.

4. Promotion and Relegation

a. Teams will be promoted or relegated to flights based on their performance in the prior year's Triple Crown Tour. The primary mechanism for promotion/relegation is a team's finish in the postseason.

b. Pro Flight

i. The top eight teams based on final standings at the prior season's National Championships.

- ii. If a Pro Flight vacancy exists, the vacant spot will be awarded to the highest finishing Elite Flight team from the prior year's National Championships. [Click here for more info on Pro Flight vacancies.](#)
- c. Elite Flight
 - i. Teams that finished 9th-16th at the prior season's National Championships.
 - ii. If an Elite Flight vacancy exists, the vacant spot will be awarded to the Top Select team with the highest end of year ranking from the prior season. [Click here for more info on Elite Flight vacancies.](#)
- d. Select Flight
 - i. The top four finishers in each region from the prior season's Regional Championships that did not qualify for the National Championships.
 - ii. The top finishing Select Flight team in each region will be referred to as a "Top Select" team.
 - iii. If a Select Flight vacancy exists, the vacant spot may be awarded to the next highest finishing team in that region from the prior season's Regional Championships. [Click here for more info on Select Flight vacancies.](#)
- e. Classic Flight - All other teams that do not qualify for the Pro, Elite or Select flights.

5. Definition of a Team

- a. The following rules will define a team from year to year, for the purpose of determining its flight status and eligibility for competing in the Triple Crown Tour. Note that the purpose of the promotion/relegation system is to not only reward teams based on their performance and create meaningful playing opportunities for those teams, but to incentivize consistency in team organization, branding, location and participation from year to year.
- b. A team will be defined primarily by its name and home location (city, state). In order to change either a team's name or its home location, and still retain the team's place in the TCT, the team must present an appeal to USA Ultimate describing its rationale. Appeals must be submitted by May 1 to your National Director with the Club Competition Manager copied (carolina@hq.usultimate.org).
- c. Pro, Elite and Top Select teams must retain a minimum of seven players from the prior season in order to retain the team's identity and flight status.
- d. If a Pro, Elite or Top Select team is returning the next year, a "new" team in the same division may not have eight or more from that team's roster the prior year, in order to be eligible for the postseason. An exception may be granted if the new team plays at least 10 regular season games.

e. If a Pro, Elite or Top Select team is not returning the next year, a "new" team in the same division may not have eight or more from that team's roster the prior year, in order to be eligible for the postseason.

f. If a Pro, Elite or Select team splits into two teams and both wish to retain the team's flight status earned the prior year, the team with the most returning players will be recognized as the returning team. The returning players used in the analysis will be required to be on the roster for that team for the season.

6. Name/Logo/Uniform Guidelines

a. USA Ultimate reserves the right, at any time, to prohibit, alter or require a team to alter a team name, player or coach nickname, team logo, jersey graphic, sponsor name/graphic or uniform and/or suggest alternatives at or in conjunction with a USA Ultimate program or event should USA Ultimate personnel determine that the existing name, logo, graphic or uniform is in conflict with or might hinder the mission of the organization or the goals of a specific USA Ultimate program or event. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual references, profanity, drug references and any discriminatory language or graphics. Alterations must meet with the approval of USA Ultimate personnel.

b. Frequently Asked Questions on Name/Logo/Uniform Guidelines.

7. Uniform Requirements

a. Player Uniform Requirements

i. All USA Ultimate Regular Season and Postseason Events - Names, logos and graphics on jerseys must comply with the Name/Logo/Uniform Guidelines above.

ii. Sanctioned Regular Season Events - Teams and players are encouraged to follow the uniform requirements for the National Championships.

iii. Regional Championships - Teams participating in the Regional Championship finals are required to have players on their team wear matching jerseys while playing. Teams and players are encouraged to follow the uniform requirements for the National Championships.

iv. National Championships, U.S. Open Club Championships, Pro and Elite Flight Events (Elite-Select Challenge, Pro-Elite Challenge and Pro Flight Finale).

- All participating players for a given team must wear jerseys of identical color and design.

- Tank tops, short sleeve jerseys and long sleeve jerseys may all be worn during the same game as long as styling is consistent between all options.

- Base layers must be black, white or a matching color to the jersey.

- Teams must have two jerseys of distinctly different color, one predominantly white and one predominantly dark. A jersey that is not white does not automatically qualify as a dark. Any color that may be described as light does not qualify as a dark jersey (e.g., yellow, pink, light blue, etc.).
- Jerseys must have numbers on the back and front of the jersey. The numbers on the back must be at least six (6) inches high, be one or two digit Arabic numerals, be solid and in clear contrast with the jersey. Numbers on the front of the jersey must be at least four (4) inches high, be located above the waist and clearly visible if tucked in. The front of the jersey is anything on the chest or abdomen; numbers on the front of the sleeves do not fulfill this requirement. No two players on a given team may use the same number or numbers with the same value (e.g., 00 and 0, 01 and 1, etc.).
- Uniform bottoms (shorts) worn by players on the field must be of identical color and design. Teams are not required to have numbers on their uniform bottoms. However if teams opt to include numbers, they must be on the front left or right leg of their shorts. Number placement must be the same for the whole team. The numbers must be at least two (2) inches high, match the number on the back of their jersey and be in visible contrast with the jersey. Pants and skirts are not allowed as part of the on-field uniform without the pre-approval of USA Ultimate.
- Uniform accessories including tights, undershirts, compression sleeves and hats must be either solid black or coordinated with one team uniform color. Socks that are mid-calf or lower must be black, white or coordinating with one team color. Socks that sit above mid-calf must abide by the tights requirement.
- USA Ultimate reserves the right to suspend players or fine teams who fail to meet the uniform requirements. For more information please review the USA Ultimate Triple Crown Tour Guidelines section entitled "Violations and Sanctions."
- For broadcast games, USA Ultimate reserves the right to increase requirements to comply with broadcast partner standards and requirements. In light of this potential, it is recommended that teams and players prepare for the possibility of additional requirements such as hats, socks and under-layers which match across all players.

Examples of style decisions to avoid:



Not a solid color. Difficult to see from a distance.

Not a contrasting color

Not a contrasting color

Not a contrasting color

Difficult to read font

Examples of acceptable jerseys:



b. Coach Attire Requirements

i. All USA Ultimate Regular Season and Postseason Events - Names, logos and graphics on coaching attire must comply with the Name/Logo/Uniform Guidelines above

ii. Sanctioned Regular Season Events - Coaches are encouraged to follow the coaching attire requirements for the National Championships (below).

iii. Regional Championships - Coaches are encouraged to follow the coaching attire requirements for the National Championships (below).

iv. National Championships, U.S. Open Club Championships, Pro and Elite Flight Events.

- All coaches must wear either a uniform of identical color and design as the team, or professional coaching attire as defined below.

- Professional coaching attire is defined as any combination of the following:

- ⇒ The team jersey or a sleeved shirt/polo is matching the team uniform colors.

⇒ Team shorts/skirt or hemmed slacks/shorts/skirt are of an appropriate solid color.
⇒ Business casual attire
⇒ Closed toe shoes such as cleats, flats or athletic shoes. Flip flops, open toed sandals and bare feet are not considered professional coaching attire.

- Coach jerseys and shorts are not subject to the number requirements for players
- It is recommended that uniform accessories including weather related gear, tights, undershirts, hats and socks be of identical or coordinated style and color.
- USA Ultimate reserves the right to remove from the sideline/field and/or fine coaches who fail to meet the uniform requirements.

8. Coaching Certification Requirements and Sideline Access Policy

a. Coach Sideline Access Policy

i. During games at Triple Crown Tour events where field access is restricted, sideline access will only be granted to players and USA Ultimate Coach Members that are designated by the team, USA Ultimate event staff and credentialed media*. All other non-player support staff with player-level or limited field access, including coaches, must read, sign and agree to abide by the USA Ultimate Coaching Code of Ethics and Spirit of Coaching Statement. The limit on the number of coaches and team support personnel, all of whom must comply with the above policy, is as follows:

- Coaches** – Five (may have player-level access to sidelines/field)
 - o Coaches must be listed on the team's online event roster prior to the event in order to have sideline access.
 - o Coaches of teams from the United States or Canada must be on the team's rosters, which means coaches must have an active coach-level USA Ultimate membership. ***
 - o Coaches of teams from outside the United States or Canada must be approved by their country's National Federation prior to the U.S. Open Club Championships in order to have sideline access.
- Team Support – Two (must remain in team ten/bench area during points):

* Media must contact the USA Ultimate media manager for credentials and event media waivers.

** College/Club or Level I Certification is encouraged, but is not currently a requirement for coaches at club events. This is not to be confused with having a Coach Membership. Coach memberships are required for all club events.

*** Teams from the United States and Canada with coaches should take the necessary steps to make sure that their coach is a Coach Member of USA Ultimate, including completing the SafeSport training and obtaining a "Green Light" on a NCSI Background check. These checks take an average of 10 business days to complete and can be started here. Coaches who have lived outside of the United States in the last five years should expect a longer turn-around time and a higher cost for their background checks.

ii. Restricted sideline access

Events with restricted sideline access currently include games at the U.S. Open Club Championships, but may be expanded to include other games at the Pro-Elite Challenge, Elite-Select Challenge and Pro Championships.

9. Formats

a. Regular Season

i. Major TCT Events (Pro-Elite Challenge, Select Flight Invite, U.S. Open Club Championships, Elite-Select Challenge and Pro Championships) – Formats will be determined by USA Ultimate based on competitive, promotional, and logistical considerations.

ii. All other Sanctioned Regular Season Events – Formats must be in line with sanctioned event requirements. Otherwise, they are left to the discretion of the event organizer.

b. Postseason

i. Sectionals and Regionals - Formats will be determined by coordinators using USA Ultimate guidelines in the USA Ultimate Formats Manual. Any variations must be approved through the National Division Director. Contact your [Sectional or Regional Coordinator](#) for information.

ii. Nationals - Format changes will be determined and announced by USA Ultimate prior to the end of the regular season, and will be based on competitive, promotional, and logistical considerations. Additional changes may be made if determined by USA Ultimate to be necessary to meet goals for the event.

10. Seeding

a. Regular Season

i. Pro and Elite Events (Pro-Elite Challenge, Select Flight Invite, U.S. Open Club Championships, Elite-Select Challenge and Pro Championships) – Seeding will be determined by USA Ultimate.

ii. All other Sanctioned Regular Season Events – Seeding must be in line with sanctioned event requirements. Otherwise, it is left to the discretion of the event organizer.

b. Postseason

i. Seeding for Sectionals, Regionals and Nationals will be done by the event coordinator using the following information: results prior to the postseason (e.g., head to head, common opponents, tournament finish) with an emphasis on official regular season results and regular season rankings, input solicited from all the captains of participating teams, results of the prior year's season, and other applicable information.

ii. Seeding for Regionals will additionally be held to the following guideline: no team that finishes ahead of another team at Sectionals may be seeded behind that team at Regionals.

iii. Seeding for Nationals Championships will additionally be held to the following guideline: the order of finish at Regionals will be strongly considered in determining seeding for Nationals, but will not be binding.

iv. Seeding for any postseason event must be approved by the next coordinator in the chain of command. If the USA Ultimate coordinators for the event and their immediate supervisor are affiliated with the same team (player, coach, alum, etc.) seeding must be approved by the next highest unaffiliated USA Ultimate coordinator or staff.

11. Forfeit Rule

a. Regular Season

i. As a general rule, USA Ultimate prohibits the forfeiting of scheduled games during the regular season. Teams are expected to play out their entire schedule of games at events they have chosen to enter. The competition format of an event and the season as a whole rely on scheduled games being played. All teams entering an event should expect that their opponents will play their scheduled games. These rules apply regardless of the caliber of the opponent or the stage of the competition in which a game is scheduled.

- Any team that declines to finish a scheduled game or games or attempts to decide a match by any manner other than playing ultimate on the field will forfeit those games. Should both teams in a match choose not to play, then it will be considered a double forfeit.
- If one team is not ready to play at game-time, points may be assessed, in accordance with the 12th Edition Rules of Ultimate (Section 9.A.4). Under these conditions, if the score of the game reaches 8-0, the team that has failed to signal readiness will technically forfeit the game.

- A team will be considered to have forfeited any game where the number of players that can safely participate falls below the minimum requirement set by the competition minimums above.
- Reporting false scores will be treated with significant sanctions. If a game is forfeited, teams must report the forfeiture. If a game is not finished, scores and game length are to be reported as they are. Teams may not manipulate the final score to reach the game minimum. Violating this rule will incur sanctions for both teams involved. See iii. Sanctions below for more information.

ii. Exceptions

- The safety of athletes is a top priority and must be considered when determining whether a game should be played and under what conditions.
- Consideration should be given if a team misses the first game of the first day because of travel problems.
- Tournament formats and event schedules must fall within the guidelines set forth for sanctioned events, and must be published two business days prior to the event.
- Games that are the last of an event for both teams may be forfeited, provided the tournament director and both teams are in agreement.

iii. Sanctions - USA Ultimate reserves the right to sanction teams that forfeit games during the regular season.

- Sanctions may include, but are not limited to disqualification from the regular season and/or series, rankings and/or bid allocation penalties, team and/or player/coach suspensions, financial penalties and team and/or member conduct hearings. Game forfeits will be dealt with on a case by case basis, taking into account all pertinent facts and perspectives.

b. Postseason

i. A team must play all its games at a "qualifying" tournament in order to advance to the next tournament in the Postseason Championship Series:

- A team that forfeits a postseason game, and every player on that team's postseason event roster, is disqualified for the remainder of the postseason.
- Any team that declines to finish a scheduled game or games or attempts to decide a match by any manner other than playing ultimate on the field will forfeit those games. Should both teams in a match choose not to play, then it will be considered a double forfeit.

- At the discretion of the events USA Ultimate coordinator, consideration may be given to situations that might warrant an exception being made, provided it does not affect the fairness or integrity of the competition.

- Consideration should be given if a team misses the first game of the first day because of travel problems.

ii. If one team is not ready to play at game-time, points may be assessed, in accordance with the 12th Edition Rules of Ultimate (Section 9.A.4). Under these conditions, if the score of the game reaches 8-0, the team that has failed to signal readiness will technically forfeit the game.

iii. A team will be considered to have forfeited any game where the number of players that can safely participate falls below the minimum requirement set by the competition minimums above.

iv. Exceptions: In the following two cases, outlined in the [Formats Manual](#), a scheduled game at a Postseason event may be left unplayed.

- Case 1

- ⇒ It is the last game of the tournament for both teams.

- ⇒ Both teams are already guaranteed to advance to the next stage of the postseason (or both teams have already been eliminated from advancing).

- ⇒ Neither of the teams wishes to play the game.

- ⇒ If ALL of the above conditions are met, then the game may be left unplayed. The final placement of the teams will be determined based on their current standing in the format.

- Case 2

- ⇒ It is the last game of the tournament for both teams.

- ⇒ The teams have played twice already in the tournament and one team has a 2-0 record against the other team.

- ⇒ Either one of the teams does not wish to play the game.

- ⇒ The team with the 2-0 record will be placed above the other team in the final tournament rankings.

12. [Rules](#)

a. By default, all games should be played using the current edition of the [USA Ultimate Official Rules of Ultimate](#).

b. Regular Season

i. Pro, Elite and Select Events – Game rules will be determined by USA Ultimate.

ii. All other Sanctioned Regular Season Events – Game rules may be modified at the discretion of the event organizer, provided they meet event guidelines outlined in the USA Ultimate sanctioned-event agreement.

c. Postseason

i. All games will be played using the current edition of the USA Ultimate Official Rules of Ultimate. Any changes to these rules must be pre-approved by the USA Ultimate Competition Committee. Any experimental changes authorized by USA Ultimate for use during the postseason will be outlined in this section of the guidelines and communicated to team and event organizers prior to the start of the regular season.

ii. Teams participating in the National Championships will be required to have a representative from their team take and successfully pass a rules quiz. The quiz will cover basic rules questions, cap rules, and observer applications. Completion of this quiz is mandatory for all teams attending the 2020 National Championships.

13. Observers

a. All use of Observers will be subject to the guidelines and practices of the [USA Ultimate Observer Program](#).

b. Regular Season

i. Only USA Ultimate Certified Observers are permitted to officiate at USA Ultimate sanctioned events, including Sanctioned Regular Season Events.

ii. Sanctioned Regular Season Events must be played in accordance with the guidelines for USA Ultimate sanctioned events. Experimental changes in officiating responsibilities (i.e., those outside of the current edition of the [USA Ultimate Observer Manual](#)) may be permitted, but must be communicated in detail during the sanctioning application process and must be pre-approved by the USA Ultimate.

c. Postseason Championship Series

i. Only USA Ultimate Certified Observers are permitted to officiate at USA Ultimate Postseason events.

ii. If officials are used during the postseason, their duties must be in line with those described in the [USA Ultimate Observer Manual](#). Any changes to these duties must be pre-approved by the Competition Committee. Any experimental changes authorized by USA Ultimate for use during the Postseason will be outlined in this section of the guidelines and communicated to team and event organizers prior to the start of the regular season.

14. Gender Division Eligibility

a. Male players are eligible to compete in the men's and mixed divisions.

b. Female players are eligible to compete in the men's, mixed and women's divisions.

c. On-field gender ratio rules for the mixed division are described below in the Mixed Division Gender Ratio section of the Competition Guidelines.

d. The eligibility of transgender, non-binary and other athletes will be governed by the [USA Ultimate Policy on Transgender Athletes](#).

15. Mixed Division Gender Ratio

- a. The gender ratio for the mixed division of the Triple Crown Tour regular season and postseason will be 4/3 (four men and three women or four women and three men).
- b. At the start of the game, after the first disc flip, an additional disc flip happens with the winner selecting which end zone is the "genzone." At the start of each point, the team that is at the genzone must choose the gender ratio. This process applies for the entire game (the "Genzone Decides Rule").

The Genzone Decides Rule shall be utilized at all Sanctioned Regular Season and Postseason Events in 2020 with the exception of the U.S. Open. In 2020, at the U.S. Open, mixed teams will use WFDF's Rule A for deciding the gender ratio. Rule A is as follows:

At the start of the game, after the first disc flip, an additional disc flip happens with the winner selecting the gender ratio for the first point. For the second and third points the ratio must be the reverse of the first point. For the fourth and fifth points the ratio must be the same as the first point. This pattern of alternating the ratio every two points repeats until the end of the game (half time has no impact on the pattern).

- c. If a team cannot match the gender of all seven players on the team determining the gender ratio for the point, then it must play with fewer than seven players, matching the gender of as many players as possible.

d. Injury timeouts

- i. In the event of an injury timeout where a player leaves the field, the replacing player must be the same gender as the injured player.
- ii. If a team replaces players, the opposing team has the option of substituting a like number of, or fewer players.
 - The replacing player(s) must be the same gender as the player(s) they replace.
 - If a team calls an injury timeout but does not have a replacement player of the same gender as the injured player, it may not replace that player and must play fewer than seven players.

VI. **Violations and Sanctions**

Failure to abide by any of the Triple Crown Tour Guidelines may result in sanctions through the USA Ultimate conduct process. Such sanctions may be imposed on a team or individuals associated with a team deemed to be in violation of the guidelines and may include, but are not limited to, suspension or disqualification from USA Ultimate competition.

Disqualification may include not only elimination of the team from the current season, but also limitations on participation of players during the remainder of current season, and limitation on participation of the team (and its players) in subsequent seasons.

In order to help teams follow Triple Crown Tour Guidelines and avoid violations, USA Ultimate will continue to work to improve registration procedures and communication of information pertaining to

the USA Ultimate Triple Crown Tour. As these improvements are made by the organization, teams will continue to be held more fully responsible for following procedures and understanding information. Because consistency in holding all participants to the same administrative and competitive standards is vital to the integrity of the TCT, because many violations lead to unfair advantages in competition, and because it is often difficult to determine intent, guideline violations will result in serious repercussions. Such repercussions will provide an incentive for players and teams to understand the guidelines fully, follow the guidelines carefully, and avoid intended or unintended violations in the future.

VII. **International Events - Qualification and Eligibility**

D. **2021 World Games**

The 2021 World Games (WG) will be held in Birmingham, Alabama on July 15-25, 2021. There will be a single selection camp (tryouts) where interested, eligible players can compete for a spot on the mixed team to represent the United States in international competition.

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. In order to demonstrate support for, and an active understanding of USA Ultimate and WFDF rules, officiating systems, standards and expectations:

i. Players must have actively participated in the USA Ultimate College Series or Club Series during the year prior to the WG event.

ii. Players must participate in the USA Ultimate College Series or be rostered and actively participating on a USA **Ultimate club team during the year of the WG event.**

iii. Players must have been on one of the three WUGC 2020 teams (Men's, Mixed, Women's).

iv. Exceptions to this rule may only be granted by the USA Ultimate Competition Working Group.

b. A player participating on a USA Ultimate team may not participate on any other team at the event.

c. Players must be USA Ultimate members in good standing in order to apply for the team and at the time the WUGC event takes place.

2. Residency Requirements

a. USA Ultimate adheres to the National Team eligibility requirements set forth by WFDF, with the following additional restrictions:

i. Players are deemed to be eligible if they own a U.S. passport or equivalent legal documentation issued by the U.S. government.

ii. The U.S. team may have up to three (3) players on the roster who are deemed to be "Resident non-citizens." These "resident non-citizen" players must:

1. Own a legal certificate of permanent residency issued by the U.S. government; or
2. Have resided in the United States at least two (2) years prior to the state date of the event and spent more than 75% of those two years in the country.