

2020 Masters Division Guidelines

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I. OVERVIEW

The Masters Division - which includes the following divisions: great grand masters, grand masters men's, grand masters women's, masters men's, masters mixed, and masters women's - will have specific competition, eligibility and geographic guidelines. USA Ultimate recognizes that each division has unique differences at this time and will adjust guidelines that best fit each division. As the sport of ultimate continues to grow, the masters division will need to continue to evolve to accommodate new age divisions. The next steps towards adding and/or restructuring age divisions are described in Section III (Age Requirements) below.

There were a few changes in the offseason that will be in effect for the 2020 Masters Series. These changes include, but are not limited to:

- Out of region roster limits for Great Grand Masters will be reduced to 7 players from 10 in 2020. This number will be reduced to 5 in 2021, consistent with other men's masters divisions.
- The number of teams required to hold a regional event has been increased to 4 teams, to create a more robust event experience for attending teams. Options to migrate to adjacent regional events will be determined after registration in areas with fewer than 4 teams.
- Regionals will be scheduled for a single weekend, June 13-14, to facilitate planning and potential team migration options as needed.
- Roster limits for all divisions lowered from 29 to 28, to facilitate gender-balanced rosters in the mixed division, and for consistency in other divisions.
- USA Ultimate has adopted a new rule set for 2020 - 2021. The new rule set can be found here. A document showing changes between the 11th edition and the 2020 - 2021 can be found here.

USA Ultimate is considering additional changes for future masters division seasons. The following will NOT be in effect for 2020, but are being considered for 2021 and beyond.

- Updates to divisional nomenclature to incremental age classifications, such as Over-30, Over-33, Over-40, Over-50 and others, similar to youth division age classifications (e.g. Under-20 and Under-17)
- Adding Great Grand Masters Women's, Grand Masters Mixed
- Consideration of a 4 day staggered National Championship to accommodate more and/or larger divisions

II. SERIES DATES

The Masters Series will run June 13, 2020 through July 19, 2020. Regional events, if required, will be held over the weekend of June 13-14. The [2020 USA Ultimate Masters Championships](#) will be held in Aurora, CO, on July 17-19, 2020 at the Aurora Sports Complex.

III. AGE REQUIREMENTS

The minimum age for the 2020 USA Ultimate Masters Championships are as follows (age as of 12/31/20).

- Great Grand Masters: 50 for male players; 45 for female players
- Grand Masters Men's: 40
- Grand Masters Women's: 37
- Masters Mixed: 33 for male players; 30 for female players
- Masters Men's: 33
- Masters Women's: 30

IV. USA ULTIMATE MASTERS DIVISION REGISTRATION

All teams will be required to adhere to the same registration deadlines in 2020.

A. Masters Series Registration

1. Team Registration Deadline - Friday, April 10, 2020. (by 5pm MDT/7pm EDT)
 - a. In order to participate in the USA Ultimate Masters Series, teams must be created via the online rostering system and registered for their appropriate regional event with a valid event roster (10-player minimum) by Friday, April 10 at 5pm MDT/7pm EDT.

b. Instructions for creating a team and building an event roster can be found using the links below:

1. [How to Create a Team](#)
2. [Register for an event and create an event roster](#)

Using the links above, team managers will create their team in the rostering system, add players to the team's personnel list, register the team for a regional event and then add players to the event roster. Players must be on the team's regional event roster in order to compete in the USA Ultimate Masters Series.

c. After the Team Registration Deadline, team managers may edit and add up to a maximum of 28 players to their USA Ultimate Masters Series event roster until the Final Event Roster Deadline ([see below](#)).

2. Final Event Roster Deadline

a. To participate in the USA Ultimate Masters Series (regionals and/or nationals), players must be on a team's regional championships Event Roster by the Final Event Roster Deadline, the Wednesday before the team's regional tournament.

Regional Weekend	Final Event Roster Deadline for the Masters Series:
June 13-14, 2020	Wednesday, June 10 (5pm MDT)

b. Up to 28 players can be on a team's USA Ultimate Masters Series event roster. Team managers can add or remove players from their team's Event Roster until the Final Event Roster Deadline.

B. Championships Deadline

1. Final event rosters for the 2020 Masters Championships are due on the following:

a. If a team is playing in a qualifying regional event, their final Event Roster is due on the Wednesday preceding their regional event at 5pm MDT/7pm EDT.

b. If a team has received an automatic bid to the USA Ultimate Masters Championships, their final event roster is due June 10, 5pm MDT/7pm EDT (the Wednesday preceding the weekend of regional events).

2. Teams participating in the USA Ultimate Masters Championships will receive a qualifiers' packet with information relating to the championship event. Teams competing in the championship event must submit all required paperwork and player fees by Wednesday, June 24, 5pm MDT/7pm EDT. After a team accepts a bid to the Masters Championships, USA Ultimate staff will use the event management system

to rollover the team (including the team's event roster) to register the team for the Masters Championships.

C. Team Requirements

1. Registration Clarification and Exceptions

a. Event Roster Changes

i. All series players must be on a team's regional championships Event Roster prior to the Final Event Roster Deadline.*

ii. Players may not compete on more than one team in the Masters Series.

*Exceptions:

- Roster appeals:

If a player has been accidentally omitted from a team's event roster or requires additional clarification after the Final Event Roster Deadline, please contact Byron Hicks at USA Ultimate HQ (byron@hq.usultimate.org) to file a player appeal, by the deadlines in the table below. Please note this process is not for teams that miss the April 10 Team Registration Deadline.

b. Player Appeals

i. The deadline for submitting a player appeal (including materials or any other requested documentation) is 5pm MDT, the day after the team's Final Event Roster deadline.

Regionals Weekend	Final Event Roster Deadline	Player Appeal Deadline
June 13-14, 2020	Wednesday, June 10 (5pm MDT)	Thursday, June 11 (5pm MDT)

ii. Appeals for late or incorrect registration of players may or may not be granted, and may require payment of a late fee.

c. Player Minimums

i. In order for a team to participate in the USA Ultimate Masters Series, it must have at least 10 players on its regional championships event roster at the Final Event Roster Deadline.

d. Player Maximums

- i. The maximum size of a team's event roster for the USA Ultimate Masters Series is 28 players.

2. Geographic Requirements

A team must represent one of the current eight masters regions.

a. Masters Men's / Masters Mixed / Grand Masters Men's

- i. At least 75 percent of the players on a team's roster must reside in the region a team is representing.
- ii. No more than five (5) players may reside outside the region that the team is representing.

b. Great Grand Masters Men's

- i. At least 75 percent of the players on a team must reside in the region a team is representing.
- ii. No more than 7 players may reside outside the region that the team is representing.

c. Masters Women's / Grand Masters Women's

- i. At least 51 percent of the players on a team must reside in the region a team is representing.
- ii. No more than 10 players may reside outside the region that the team is representing.

d. Residence is defined as meeting **BOTH** of the following requirements:

- i. Location where the person is living for the majority of July, AND
- ii. Location where the person is living for the majority of either three (3) months prior to July 1 or immediately following July 31.

d. 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 the team's out-of-region limits.

3. Official Team Count

a. A division's official team count will include all teams that meet the division's registration requirements and competition guidelines. Teams must compete in a USA Ultimate Masters Series event to be included in the division's official team count.

b. In order to hold a championship event for a division, the division must have at least six (6) teams in its "official team count."

D. Player Requirements

1. Age Requirements – The minimum age (as of 12/31/2020) for 2020 USA Ultimate Masters Championships are as follows:

- a. Great Grand Masters: 50 years – men; 45 years – women
- b. Grand Masters Men's: 40 years
- c. Grand Masters Women's: 37 years
- d. Masters Men's: 33 years
- e. Masters Women's: 30 years
- f. Masters Mixed: 33 years – men; 30 years – women

2. Roster Requirements

a. All players participating in the Masters Series must be on a valid team's regional championships event roster.

The ramifications for having an unrostered player (i.e. a player that is not on the team's regionals event roster) participate in the Masters Series with that team are outlined in the "Violations and Sanctions" section of these guidelines.

b. USA Ultimate Dues – All players must be current members in good standing before they can be added to a team's event roster.

c. Liability Waivers – Each player must (completely and correctly) fill out the appropriate USA Ultimate waiver form for the year in which they will be competing. This form is good for the entire calendar year. Waivers may be submitted online via a player's membership account page.

E. USA Ultimate Contact Information

Masters Championships

(Division/Name of Team)

USA Ultimate

5825 Delmonico Drive
Suite 350
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Byron Hicks
Manager – Events
719-219-8324 x121

byron@hq.usultimate.org

V. COMPETITION GUIDELINES

A. Spirit of the Game

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, 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.

Click [here](#) for more information about Spirit of the Game.

B. Regional Championships

1. Requirements for Regionals

a. All Divisions

i. The division will be required to host regional events if the division has more teams than bids to the USA Ultimate Masters Championships at the conclusion of the Team Registration Deadline.

If a region has fewer than four (4) teams, the teams must all migrate to an adjacent region to compete, under the following conditions:

Migrating teams will carry their original region's bid with them to their new qualifying regional event. Migration decisions will be made on a case by case basis.

C. USA Ultimate Masters Championships

1. National event scaling

At the conclusion of the Team Registration Deadline, the USA Ultimate Manager of Events and the National Masters Directors will review registration numbers to determine the preliminary division sizes of each division at the Masters Championships.

USA Ultimate may increase division sizes at the Masters Championships to promote equity, maximize participation, and maintain format and schedule integrity given venue capacity. The table below refers to the **preliminary** sizes for each division competing at the 2020 USA Ultimate Masters Championships.

Preliminary Division Size at Championships	Number of Teams at Registration Deadline
16 teams	See note above
12 teams	20+ teams
10 teams	16-19 teams
8 teams	15 or fewer teams

2. Regional bids

Bids will be awarded to the Masters Championships based on number of teams and players registered with valid Event Rosters at the Team Registration Deadline and finalized upon submittal of Event Rosters for the Regional Events.

a. 16-team divisions

Each region with at least one (1) Event Roster will automatically receive one (1) bid to the USA Ultimate Masters Championships. All unallocated bids will be awarded as size wildcards.

b. 12-team divisions

Each region with at least one (1) Event Roster will automatically receive one (1) bid to the USA Ultimate Masters Championships. All unallocated bids will be awarded as size wildcards.

c. 10-team divisions

Each region with at least one (1) Event Roster will automatically receive one (1) bid to the USA Ultimate Masters Championships. All unallocated bids will be awarded as size wildcards.

d. 8-team divisions

If a division has eight (8) or fewer Event Rosters, all teams in that division will automatically be awarded bids to the USA Ultimate Masters Championships.

If a division has 9-15 Event Rosters, each region with at least one (1) Event Roster will automatically receive one bid to the USA Ultimate Masters Championships. All unallocated bids will be awarded as size wildcards.

3. *Size Wildcards (all divisions)*

a. *The remaining bids to the USA Ultimate Masters Championships will be awarded based on the number of Event Rosters. Size Wildcard bids will be awarded in order, one bid at a time to all regions with four (4) or more teams, starting with the largest region at the time of the Team Registration Deadline, until bids have been exhausted. In the event of a tie in the number of teams per region, total player count at the time of the Team Registration Deadline will be used to determine the larger region.*

b. *Teams that are migrated to a new region will count in that new region's count for a Size Wildcard.*

D. Name/Logo Uniform Guidelines

USA Ultimate reserves the right to alter, or require a team to alter, a team name, player nickname, team logo, jersey 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 might hinder the mission of the organization or the goals of a specific USA Ultimate program or event. Alterations must meet with the approval of USA Ultimate personnel. Any sponsor logos on a team's uniform other than the apparel manufacturer must be approved by USA Ultimate.

E. Uniform Requirements

1. Player Uniform Requirements

a. Regionals - Teams participating in regionals 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 Masters Championships.

b. Masters Championships

i. All players participating in the USA Ultimate Masters Championships for a given team must wear jerseys of identical color and design.

ii. Teams must have two jerseys of distinctly different color; one primarily dark and the other primarily white.

- iii. Jerseys must have numbers on the back. The numbers on the back must be at least six (6) inches high and be one or two-digit Arabic numerals, be solid and in clear contrast with the jersey. 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).
- iv. Uniform bottoms worn by players on the field must be of identical color and design.
- v. Number placement must be the same for the whole team.
- vi. It is recommended that the uniform accessories including tights, undershirts, hats and socks be of identical or coordinated style and color.
- vii. USA Ultimate reserves the right to disqualify and/or fine players who fail to meet the uniform requirements.

F. Formats

The formats for the event will be determined by USA Ultimate Masters Series staff, with the goals of determining a champion, showcasing the division at its best and providing a great playing experience for all the teams.

G. Seeding

Seeding for the USA Ultimate Masters Championships will be done by Masters Series staff using the following information: input solicited from all the captains of participating teams; results of head to head match-ups prior to the Masters Championships; prior Masters Championships results; other applicable information such as team composition during or prior to the Masters Championships (USA Ultimate has the authority to adjust rankings according to the best information available).

H. Forfeit Rule

A team must play all its games at a "qualifying" tournament in order to qualify for the next tournament in the Masters Series.

1. A team that forfeits a Masters Series game, and every player on that team's event roster, is disqualified for the remainder of the current series, in every division.
2. 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.
3. A team will be considered to have forfeited any game where the number of players that can safely participate falls below five (5) players.

4. At the discretion of the event's 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.

5. If one team is not ready to play at game-time, points may be assessed, in accordance with the 11th Edition Rules of Ultimate (Section VIII.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.

6. The list of allowable forfeit scenarios is found in the [formats manual](#).

I. Rules

The USA Ultimate Masters Series 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 Masters Series headquarters staff.

USA Ultimate has adopted a new rule set for 2020 - 2021. The new rule set can be found [here](#). A document showing changes between the 11th edition and the 2020 - 2021 can be found [here](#).

USA Ultimate highly encourages all team managers read these new rules and communicate these changes to their teams.

J. Observers

USA Ultimate will have a limited amount of observers on hand for the event. Teams wishing observers for their games must contact the Manager of Events prior to their games to receive consideration of their request. Observers will be assigned at the discretion of Head Observer and USA Ultimate when scheduling conflicts arise.

K. Gender Division Eligibility

a. Male players are eligible to compete in all divisions except for Grand Masters Women's and Masters Women's.

b. Female players are eligible to compete in all divisions.

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

L. Mixed Division Gender Ratio

a. The gender ratio for the Masters Division 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.

c. If a team cannot match the gender of all seven (7) 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.

1. The replacing player(s) must be the same gender as the player(s) they replace.

2. 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 (7) players.

VI. VIOLATIONS AND SANCTIONS

Failure to abide by any of these 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.

In order to help teams follow the Masters Guidelines and avoid violations, USA Ultimate will continue to work to improve registration procedures and communication of information pertaining to the USA Ultimate Masters Championships. As these improvements are made by the organization, teams will continue to be held more fully responsible for following procedures and understanding masters information. Because consistency in holding all participants to the same administrative and competitive standards is vital to the integrity of the Masters Championships, 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.