

2023 USA Ultimate Beach Division Guidelines

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OVERVIEW

The goal of the USA Ultimate Beach Division is to provide national level competition for players in the sand. USA Ultimate will host one event in 2023: the Beach Championships, which will be held in Huntington Beach, CA, on May 13–14. The guidelines that follow are USA Ultimate’s requirements for qualification and criteria for acceptance for this year’s event.

In order to award bids early enough so that teams can prepare and finalize their teams, and so that organizers can make the necessary preparations, there will be a registration period during which the minimum number of teams (six per division) must register in order to include the division in the event.

With the goal of growing the amount of beach/sand play and building a connected local and national infrastructure, USA Ultimate will be rewarding communities that provide local playing opportunities to members, and, in so doing, encouraging communities to offer those playing opportunities going forward. Bids will be considered, giving decreasing preference to the following:

1. USA Ultimate affiliate with beach/sand activity;

2. USA Ultimate affiliate without beach/sand activity;
3. Unaffiliated organizations with USA Ultimate-sanctioned beach/sand activity;
4. Applicant teams with history of USA Ultimate-sanctioned beach/sand participation;
5. Applicant teams with history of beach/sand participation;
6. Unaffiliated organizations with unsanctioned beach/sand activity;
7. Unaffiliated organizations without beach/sand activity; and
8. Applicant teams without history of beach/sand participation.

Applicants will be asked to specify under which of the eight categories they are applying. A current list of USA Ultimate affiliates can be found [here](#). Along with the above, teams will be selected with emphasis being placed on geographic distribution and team strength.

For 2023 the following changes will be in effect (with further details below):

- USA Ultimate will be adding two new divisions: Great Grand Masters Women's and Grand Masters Mixed.
- Out of region player allowances will be slightly higher for all non-mixed division
- For all mixed divisions, whichever gender-matching players have the majority on the starting line, a player of that gender-matching group must pull.

REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

Registration Deadlines

1. Team Registration Deadline: Team must submit the [online application](#) (a pdf of the application can be found [here](#)) by February 10, 5pm mountain time to USA Ultimate headquarters. For a division to be held, at least six teams must register by the Team Registration Deadline.

Note: Registration does require the submission of a partial roster on the application of at least five players.

2. Team Confirmations will be sent out by February 24.

- Confirmed teams **must have 10 current members** rostered (all teams in mixed divisions must have at least five man-matching and five woman-matching position players rostered) and **player fees paid by March 13.**

Note: Acknowledging that not all players' gender identity may align with their sex assigned at birth, we will be using the terms "man-matching" and "woman-matching" in reference to on-field personnel matchups in all mixed divisions.

3. Final Roster Deadline: April 28 – Teams will have until this date to add players to their roster, submit team info form and pay player fees.

4. Event Date – May 13–14 in Huntington Beach, CA.

Team Requirements

There will be eleven potential divisions in the Beach Season: men's, mixed, women's, masters men's, masters mixed, masters women's, grand masters men's, grand masters mixed, grand masters women's and great grand masters men's, great grand masters women's.

Historically there has been greater interest in the Beach mixed divisions than the beach men's and women's divisions including their various masters levels. To further encourage the formation of teams for the non-mixed divisions, geographic requirements will be relaxed for those divisions only. See 7.b. below, "Geographic Requirements."

1. All teams must meet the registration deadlines with the appropriate materials as outlined in this document.

2. Final Roster Deadline

a. Beach Championships – April 28, 5pm MST.

b. Earlier registration deadlines are outlined in the section above. Player requirements are outlined below.

3. Requirements for Final Roster:

a. Players may be added, dropped, or swapped before the Final Roster Deadline.

b. Players may not be added, dropped, or swapped after the Final Roster Deadline.

4. Registration clarifications and exceptions:

a. Roster Changes

- i. Up until the Final Roster Deadline, an unlimited number of changes may be made to your roster.
- ii. **All rostered players must be entered into the online registration system prior to the Final Roster Deadline.**

5. Player Maximums

- a. Men's, mixed and women's divisions will be allowed a maximum of 18 players on a roster.
- b. Masters divisions will be allowed a maximum of 20 players on a roster.
- c. **MIXED DIVISIONS:** The number of rostered man-matching and woman-matching players may not exceed one another by more than one.

Example: If a team has nine woman-matching athletes on a roster, they must have between eight and ten man-matching athletes on the roster. A team could not have ten woman-matching athletes and eight man-matching athletes.

6. Player Minimums

- a. The USA Ultimate Beach Division sets specific player minimum requirements for both registration and competition.
- b. Registration minimums: Set to determine whether a team can officially register for the event.
 - i. 10-player minimum registered and attending. For the mixed division, a minimum of five man-matching and woman-matching players.
- c. Competition Minimums: Set to determine whether a team can continue to compete safely at the event.
 - i. Five players to start, three to continue playing. Fewer than three is a forfeit. For the mixed division, three man-matching and three woman-matching players to start and three each to continue playing.
- d. Contact USA Ultimate headquarters to determine any requirements beyond these minimums.

7. Geographic Requirements

- a. A team must represent at least one of the current club regions.
- b. Mixed, Masters Mixed, and Grand Masters Mixed teams are only allowed up to six out of region players depending on their roster size. The following are the out of region limits per roster size.

- i. 15-20 players = Six out of region players
- ii. 13-14 players = Five out of region players
- iii. 11-12 players = Four out of region players
- iv. 10 players = Three out of region players

Teams in the non-mixed divisions are allowed two additional out of region players for each roster size above (15-20 players = 8 out of region players and so on).

- c. Residence is defined as meeting BOTH of the following requirements:

- i. Location where person is living for the majority of May, AND
- ii. Location where person is living for the majority of either the three months prior to May 1, 2023 or immediately following May 31, 2023.

- d. If the above definition means 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.

8. Rosters are closed once the Final Roster Deadline has passed. No players can be added to a roster for the event without the approval of USA Ultimate staff.

9. Failure to abide by any of the above rules may result in ramifications outlined in the "Violations and Sanctions" section of these guidelines.

Player Requirements

1. Age limits – The minimum ages (as of 12/31/23) for the 2023 USA Ultimate Beach Season are as follows:

- a. Great Grand Masters: 50 for men, 47 for women, non-binary and players who prefer to self-report their gender identity

- b. Grand Masters: 40 for men, 37 for women, non-binary and players who prefer to self-report their gender identity
 - c. Masters: 33 for men; 30 for women, non-binary and players who prefer to self-report their gender identity
2. All players participating on a team must be registered on the team roster. Players may only participate in one division and be registered for only one roster for the Beach Championships.
 3. All players registered on a team's Final Roster must be current USA Ultimate members in good standing.
 4. All players must fill out (completely and correctly) the appropriate USA Ultimate waiver form for the year in which they will be competing. This form is good for the entire calendar year of USA Ultimate membership.
 5. Tournament fee – \$80.00*/player tournament fee for all players listed on the Final Roster.
**This amount is subject to change based on health and safety or other factors and will be confirmed when tournament invitations are released.*
 6. Failure to abide by any of the above rules may result in ramifications outlined in the "Violations and Sanctions" section of these guidelines.

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

Spirit of the Game

Spirit of the Game is a set of principles which places the responsibility for fair play on the player. Highly competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of mutual respect among competitors, adherence to the agreed upon rules or the basic joy of play.

All players are responsible for knowing, administering and adhering to the rules. The integrity of ultimate depends on each player's responsibility to uphold the Spirit of the Game, and this responsibility should remain paramount.

It is assumed that no player will intentionally violate the rules; thus there are no harsh penalties for inadvertent infractions, but rather a method for resuming play in a manner that simulates what most likely would have occurred absent the infraction. An intentional infraction is cheating and

considered a gross offense against the Spirit of the Game. Players are morally bound to abide by the rules and not gain advantage by knowingly committing an infraction, or calling one where none exists.

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

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 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. Alteration must meet the approval of USA Ultimate personnel.

Uniform Requirements

- All players participating in the USA Ultimate Beach Championships for a given team must wear jerseys of identical color and design.
- Teams must have two jerseys of distinctly different colors, 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, light gray, light pink, light blue).
- Jerseys must have numbers on the back of the jersey. The numbers on the back must be at least six inches high, be one- or two-digit Arabic numerals, be solid and be 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). *It is recommended that jerseys have numbers on both the front and back of the jersey.*
- Uniform bottoms 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 do opt to include numbers they must be on the front left or right leg of their shorts, although teams may opt to do both. The placement must be the same for the whole team. The numbers must be at least two inches high, match the number on the back of their jersey and be in visible contrast with the jersey.

- It is recommended that uniform accessories, including tights, undershirts, hats and socks, be identical or coordinated in style and color.
- Shoes or cleats are not permitted.
- USA Ultimate reserves the right to disqualify and/or fine players who fail to meet the uniform requirements.

Violations and Sanctions

Failure to abide by any of the above guidelines may result in sanctions through the USA Ultimate conduct process. Such sanctions may be imposed on a team or on individuals associated with a team deemed to be in violation of these guidelines, and may include, but are not limited to, suspension or disqualification from USA Ultimate competitions. In order to help teams follow Beach Division Guidelines and avoid violations, USA Ultimate will continue to work to improve registration procedures and communication of information pertaining to the USA Ultimate Beach Division. As these improvements are made by the organization, teams will continue to be held more fully responsible for understanding and following Beach Division information and procedures. Because consistency in holding all participants to the same administrative and competitive standards is vital to the integrity of the Beach Season, 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 (or ask questions for clarification), follow the guidelines carefully and avoid violations.

Formats

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

Seeding

The USA Ultimate Beach Championships event seeding will be done by USA Ultimate staff and Regional Beach Directors using the following information: input solicited from all the captains of participating teams, results of head to head match-ups prior to the Championships and team composition prior to the

Championships. USA Ultimate has the authority to adjust the seedings according to the best information available.

Rules

The 2023 Beach Season will be played under the current [2022-2023 Edition USA Ultimate rules](#). See [Appendix E for Beach Ultimate Rules Adaptations](#).

Gender Division Eligibility

- **In their USA Ultimate membership account, every athlete should select the gender identity option that best aligns with their gender identity.**
 - Players who select the **Non-Binary** or **Prefer to Self-Report** gender identity option are eligible to compete in the division in which they feel most comfortable and safe, as per [USA Ultimate's Gender Inclusion Policy](#) (approved 11.2020).
 - Note: For those who select Prefer to Self-Report, there will be a fill-in option to provide any additional information regarding your gender identity.
 - *This information will not be shared, as it is for internal educational purposes only to help us better understand any nuance related to your gender identity and its connection to your experience playing ultimate.*
- On-field personnel ratio rules for the mixed divisions are described below in the On-field Personnel Ratio for Mixed Divisions section.
- 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 david.raflo@hq.usultimate.org.

On-Field Personnel Ratio & Pull Rules for Mixed Divisions

1. The personnel ratio ***on the field*** at all times for the mixed divisions will be 3/2 (three man-matching players and two woman-matching players, or three woman-matching players and two man-matching players).

2. At the start of the game, after the first disc flip, an additional disc flip happens with the winner selecting the personnel 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).

3. Whichever gender-matching players have the majority on the starting line, a player of that gender-matching group must pull. For example, if there are 3 woman-matching players and 2 man-matching players on the line that is pulling, one of their woman-matching players must pull the disc to start the point and vice versa.

4. If a team cannot match the entire five-player personnel ratio of the opposing team, then it must play with fewer than five players, matching the personnel with as many players as possible.

5. Injury timeouts:

- a. In the event of an injury timeout where a player leaves the field, the replacing player must maintain the same personnel ratio as was with the injured player.
- b. If a team replaces players, the opposing team has the option of substituting a like number of, or fewer, players.
- c. The replacing player must maintain the same personnel ratio as was with the player they replace.
- d. If a team calls an injury timeout but does not have a replacement player to maintain the same personnel ratio as was with the injured player, it may not replace that player and must play with fewer than five players.