



FIFA® Training Centre

**BEACH SOCCER
GUIDELINES**

**for Member Associations
to organize Beach Soccer
competitions**

INTERMEDIATE

Guidelines for Member Associations to organize Beach Soccer competitions (INTERMEDIATE)

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to facilitate and provide guidelines for the delivery of a domestic beach soccer competition to the highest standard in any given country. When designing such a competition, a member association (MA) must consider its circumstances, financial resources and the status of beach soccer in the country. Although not provided for in the main body of this document, information relating to marketing, TV, media and infotainment, which are essential to the delivery of a successful competition, can be found in the annexe.

1) Domestic competitions

1.1 Beach Soccer Laws of the Game

The Beach Soccer Laws of the Game (BSLOTG) are the obligatory reference point for initial questions regarding the requirements that a beach soccer pitch must meet and to familiarise the stakeholder with the basic aspects of the game (pitch dimensions; pitch markings; number of players; equipment, including goals, goal nets and flags; and participant safety, etc.).

1.2 Governance

1.2.1 Competition: regulatory and legal framework

Competition regulations lay down the legal framework and establish the rules with which the participating teams undertake to comply to ensure a transparent and fair competition.

Competition regulations regulate the rights, duties and responsibilities of the participating teams.

The competition organisers shall provide for all eventualities.



In principle, the competition regulations shall provide for:

- qualification pathways;
- the competition format, group ranking criteria, slot allocation and draw procedures, where applicable;
- the number of players permitted on the team list and how many players may take part in the match;
- the number of match officials appointed for each match;
- the number of team officials permitted on the team bench;
- squad composition and the number of permitted foreign players;
- the responsibilities of the participating teams/MAs/competition organisers;
- refereeing matters;
- disciplinary matters, including protests;
- withdrawal, unplayed matches, abandoned matches and replacement;
- replacement of a seriously injured/ill player;
- the format of play and generic match schedule;
- kit and team equipment;
- medical/doping;
- commercial rights;
- awards; and
- closing provisions: matters not provided for in the regulations, the date of issue, approval and enforcement.

1.2.2 Safeguarding: regulatory and legal framework

The MA has a duty to protect minors and establish a proper legal framework in accordance with the national regulations in force on the status and transfer of players and in consideration of the relevant FIFA regulations to protect the rights of minors competing in senior competitions. The MA's Beach Soccer Department has a duty to protect minors and establish a protocol for photographing and filming minors that applies to all competitions and complies with the national legislation regarding the protection of minors.

All participating teams shall comply with the national regulations to be eligible to register for the competition.

As the sport becomes increasingly professional, teams are receiving advice from professionals who specialise in minors law.

The FIFA Guide to Submitting a Minor Application can be accessed via the following link: <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/2130eb84c31cf4e4/original/lb2t6bqgmi2a1x1pr5xs-pdf.pdf>

1.3 Team and player licences

1.3.1 Data collection and management

A player is eligible to compete in any beach soccer competition endorsed by either an MA or regional football association, provided that they are duly registered with their participating club's MA and hold a licence number.

Licences represent a key means for an MA to monitor active players and their demographics, while also providing a centralised system to protect players and ensure that they have direct access to medical services without incurring any additional costs.

An MA may apply a player licence fee and stipulate that licences be renewed annually. The MA shall conclude an agreement with a reputable insurance company to ensure the provision of adequate insurance for all players.

Case studies of the player registration and licence systems in place in two MAs are provided below, as examples.

Single ID: players registered with the Portuguese Football Federation (FPF) are issued with a unique ID or licence number.

Multiple IDs: players registered with the Spanish Football Association may hold two licences; one for association football and another for futsal or beach soccer. Alternatively, an player may hold a licence for futsal and another for beach soccer.

1.3.2 Player registration

The MA shall register all players in its database and comply with the applicable legal provisions in the national jurisdiction regarding the handling and protection of private data. Registering all players ensures that the MA has access to the data pertaining to all competition participants.

1.4 Match officials

1.4.1 Referees

The MA is responsible for organising pre season training sessions for referees in order to educate them on the most recent updates to the BSLOTG and to support their development. The MA shall monitor referees during the season and appoint referee assessors to evaluate and assess their performance. Referees shall be supplied with kit and equipment prior to the start of the season. The MA shall ensure the provision of adequate insurance to cover referees for the duration of the competition.

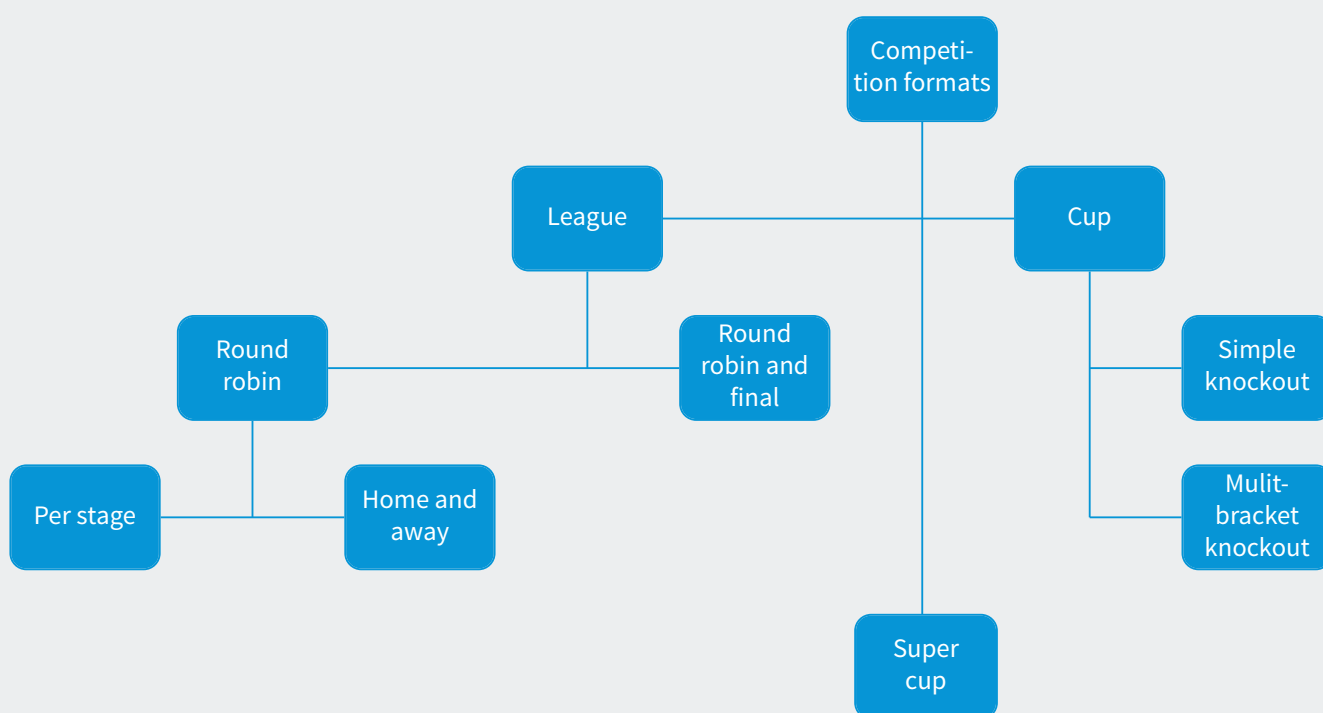
1.4.2 Referee assessors

The MA is responsible for organising educational courses for referee assessors in order to improve their knowledge of the latest edition of the BSLOTG and undertakes to establish a comprehensive and consistent system for the assessment of referees. The MA shall appoint a referee assessor for each match within the competition. Referee assessors shall have access to assessment report templates via an online reporting system or specific offline forms. The MA shall ensure the provision of adequate insurance to cover referee assessors for the duration of the competition.

1.5 Competition format

An MA that is interested in organising a domestic beach soccer competition should consider the following points prior to deciding on the competition format:

- Status of beach soccer in the country, primarily in relation to the infrastructure
- The existing association football and futsal competition formats and whether they could be applied to beach soccer
- Geographical factors (size and shape of the country)
- Time of the year and the weather conditions during the competition
- The number of participating teams and referees
- Human resources and budget forecast
- Number of matches to be played per season by each participating team



1.5.1 League or round robin

A league or round-robin system involves every participating team playing every other participating team either once or twice, depending on the number of rounds in the competition. Unlike a regular knockout tournament, this format allows participating teams to compete against a wide range of opposition and to see how they match up against all other participating teams. A standard league system involves all participating teams competing in a single group on a home and away basis. A variation on this standard league system involves creating groups comprising several teams (groups of four, six or eight teams).

The various formats that may be adopted in a league or round robin system are outlined below.

Multi-stage with final

A competition involving a league or round-robin format may be divided into stages, the number of which depends on the number of participating teams. A stage is a phase of the competition in which a group of teams compete in a round-robin format for a determined period of time or on a home and away basis. The winners of each pool or stage typically meet in a final stage.

This format is in place in the beach soccer league in Paraguay, where participating teams compete over multiple stages, with the best ranked teams after the completion of the matches played over multiple stages progressing to contest the Super final.

For example, a regular 32-team round-robin tournament in which all teams play each other once would involve a total of 496 games. To reduce the number of matches, the complexity and costs involved in such a competition format, the ideal solution would be to divide the participating teams into eight groups of four teams, which would result in a total of 48 games. The eight winners from each pool progress to compete for the championship title in a single elimination final stage or event.

The beach soccer league in Portugal is another competition that operates under this format. The top flight Campeonato Elite comprises eight teams that compete in a round-robin phase on a home and away basis across six neutral venues. In recent editions, the teams representing SC Braga, Académica Coimbra, AF Leiria and Vitória de Setúbal have organised an event on a home and-away basis at a single venue, while a further two competitions have been hosted in the southern region of Lisbon and another two in the northern region of Porto to complete the home and away league format. The final stage, which involves a knockout system, is organised by the FPF at one of the venues used in a previous stage of the competition.

**Home and away with final**

Depending on the number of participating teams, each team organise a single stage during the season, giving each of them the opportunity to play at home at least once and away at least once. The best ranked teams after the completion of the home and away phase progress to a final stage to determine the competition winner. This format is in place in the domestic beach soccer leagues in both Portugal and El Salvador.

Multi-division

Promotion and relegation system

When the number of participating teams in a single-group championship exceeds the maximum number for the competition to operate successfully, it may be divided into multiple divisions. Dividing a championship into multiple divisions encourages the participating teams to compete at the highest level. The system typically involves two or three divisions, depending on the number of participating teams. A promotion and relegation system operates between the divisions and is applied after the completion of the competition on the basis of the final standings. The workings of the promotion and relegation system are clearly outlined in the competition regulations.

Portugal offers a good example of a competition that features multiple divisions. The top tier (Campeonato Elite) comprises eight teams, while the second tier (Campeonato Nacional) features 16 sides, and 60 regional teams compete in the third rung. Meanwhile, the multi division beach soccer league in IR Iran consists of three divisions, with 12 teams competing in a single group top tier in a round robin format and each team playing against every other team twice on a home-and away basis. The top two leagues feature promotion and relegation systems. Eight teams compete in the second tier, while the third rung consists of a 24 team line up. The beach soccer league in Spain also involves two divisions: the Primera División and Segunda División.

1.5.2 Cup

Competitions that are organised in a cup format typically involve a knockout system, whereby a team are eliminated from the competition when they lose and their hopes of securing the trophy are over. However, some knockout competitions may involve a parallel competition comprising the eliminated teams. Such competitions serve to increase playing opportunities and enable the participating teams to compete to secure the highest possible finish in the final standings.

This competition format is most suited to tournaments or territories in which there are a large number of participating teams and a limited time frame in which to stage the competition.

Regional/divisional knockout

A knockout system is most suitable in situations in which there are a large number of participating teams and a limited time frame in which to stage the competition, as well as in territories that involve considerable travelling distances. The MA may decide to divide the competition geographically (north, south, east and west), while another option is to combine two criteria (regions and divisions) within the same competition format.

Multi-bracket competition – knockout format

In a pure knockout competition, each participating team remain in the competition for as long as they win matches, while they are automatically eliminated following defeat. However, in the interests of player development, multi bracket knockout competitions are recommended so as to enable losing teams to remain in the competition and compete for a play-off spot in the relegation bracket. This format offers all participating teams greater playing opportunities. The proposed format involves a competition that features a minimum of eight teams, with each team contesting three games.

1.5.3 Super cup

Some MAs operate a super cup, although it is rarely considered to be the main competition and is typically run alongside existing competitions. The competition format usually involves a single match between the winners of the league and the cup.

1.5.4 Grassroots and youth programmes

MAs and regional football associations are encouraged to organise grassroots competitions and youth programmes to promote the development of the sport. The grassroots game represents the basis of all professional activity within an MA and is key to the performance of the senior national teams. MAs of countries with a strong pedigree in beach soccer, including IR Iran and Brazil, organise school competitions to promote the sport from an early age.



1.5.5 Draw procedures

Once the competition organisers have determined the competition format, which is dependent on the number of participating teams, groups are formed (for group stages) or match pairings drawn (for knockout stage matches). The draw procedures provide for pot allocation, seeding criteria and any potential restrictions (i.e. geographical constraints), etc.

The draw procedures, which shall be shared with the participating teams, is a document that provides the participating teams with information regarding the principles of the draw, slot allocation, decisions adopted by the competition organisers, the criteria for the final draw, the draw procedures and draw constraints.

Where the draw involves the participating teams being divided into groups, the most common system is to form four team groups, while groups comprising five teams are appropriate in the case of competitions involving a longer group stage.

By contrast, if the competition organisers determine that the participating teams compete in a knockout system, the participating teams are typically drawn in pairs according to their seedings. In both of the aforementioned scenarios, the top seeded team is always preassigned to position A1 and the first seeded team in the draw.

The participating teams are typically allocated to pots on the basis of a ranking created according to past sporting performance, with the best-performing teams listed in descending order. Another allocation criteria relates to geographical considerations (by region or other geographical factors). The groups are formed by seeding and drawing of lots.

1.6 Calendar

1.6.1 Match schedule considerations

In drawing up a match schedule for a national or regional beach soccer competition, the MA should consider the following points:

- Several matches may be played on the same day so as to:
 - a) optimise the use of the temporary infrastructure; and
 - b) reduce the length of the competition to minimise the costs incurred by the participating teams.
- Matches are typically played back to back to make cost-saving efficiencies and to encourage on site spectators to attend consecutive matches.
- A match slot lasts approximately one hour and 15 minutes. In some competitions, it is preferable to allocate one hour and 30 minutes for each match to avoid delays and ensure that subsequent matches are able to start on time. In the majority of cases, it is preferable to allocate one hour and 15 minutes for each match, with one match that lasts one hour and 30 minutes during the course of the day to cater for any delays.
- Sunrise and sunset times should be taken into account in scenarios where daylight kick-offs are preferred.
- Floodlights extend the available playing hours and mean that more matches can be played on the same day or later in the day, when the temperatures drop.
- The number of pitches is an important consideration.
- The number of participating teams/matches: seven to eight matches are typically played per day on the same pitch, depending on lighting and subject to the time of the year and the geographical location (if reliant on natural light and less restricted when a lighting system is in place).
- Participating teams must be given a minimum rest period between matches.
- As top seed, the host team should play the last match of the day.
- TV broadcasters commonly issue specific requirements.
- If possible, matches should be scheduled at weekends to allow people to watch games in person or on TV or other electronic devices.
- The match schedule should avoid clashes with other major competitions taking place at the same time, e.g. football fixtures or any other sports events.
- Marketing and media coverage are important considerations.

1.6.2 Coordination with international match calendars

In any sport, it is essential that domestic and international competition calendars be aligned so as to avoid any clashes and to ensure that all players are able to participate in competitions at all levels, including representing their national team on the international stage. The MA is encouraged to ensure that its competitions are scheduled in consideration of the international beach soccer competition calendars issued by the confederations and organisers of international beach soccer tournaments.

1.7 Infrastructure

1.7.1 Stadiums

Matches must be played in a stadium that complies with the MA's stadium safety and security regulations and all other requirements set out in the relevant MA guidelines, directives and circulars.

Stadiums are nominated by the host organisation and subject to the MA's inspection and approval.

Each host organisation must ensure that the pitch is playable and complies with the requirements set out in the BSLOTG, the relevant competition and stadium regulations and all other relevant MA guidelines, directives and circulars.

1.7.2 Pitch surface and maintenance

In competition venues not located directly on the beach or where the natural sand is not suitable for play, a contention box containing 800 tons of must be built to a depth of between 25cm and 30cm. It must be made of wood or brick and be of the same height as the sand (to avoid any loss). The pitch surface must be composed of sand and must be level. It must not be rough and must be free of pebbles, shells or any other objects that could injure the players, the match officials or any other person. For international competitions, the sand must be fine and at least 40cm deep. It must be sifted until suitable for play; however, it must not be so fine as to cause dust that sticks to the skin. A good drainage system must be built to avoid the accumulation of excess water.

Pitch markings & dimensions please add a link to the BSLOTG



2) Staffing

2.1 Roles and responsibilities

Event Manager

The Event Manager is responsible for overseeing the whole project, including the project team, each department's deliverables, the project plan, key milestones and timings, as well as owning the budget and steering the relevant meetings.

Venue Manager

The Venue Manager is responsible for ensuring venue readiness from an event infrastructure and operations perspective. The Venue Manager's duties relate to stadium and facility set-up, access management, security, venue suppliers, etc. The Venue Manager has a particular focus on zones one (the pitch) and two (the competition areas, such as changing rooms, warm-up area, etc.).

Director of Competitions

The Director of Competitions holds the main responsibility for all competition-related matters within the MA and works closely with the events managers to ensure that competitions run smoothly.

Located on site at events, the Director of Competitions acts as the competition supervisor and coordinates and supports the Match Director, Match Coordinator, Referee Coordinator and Team Services staff.



Match Director

The Match Director is an official representative of the competition organizers and is responsible for competition related matters across zones one (pitch) and two (the competition areas, such as changing rooms, warm up area, etc.) at the stadium. Depending on the number of participating teams involved in the event, the Director of Competitions appoints at least one Match Director.

The Match Director is responsible not only for ensuring that all operations in zones one and two run smoothly, but also for the successful implementation and faultless organisation of all matches in the venue, having the overall authority for all match organisation-related matters, as laid out in the BSLOTG and the competition regulations.

The Match Director's roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring the readiness of the pitch in line with the latest pitch inspection reports;
- ensuring the correct implementation of all competition-related elements;
- holding meetings with the participating teams prior to the start of the competition in order to check the identity and kit of each player (i.e. at the Team Arrival Meeting or TAM);
- directing the participating teams towards the pitch and ensuring that the kick-off and half-time interval take place in a timely manner;
- providing the participating teams with information regarding match organisation;
- ensuring that all compulsory documents are signed;
- holding technical meetings with the participating teams and referees prior to the start of the competition;
- ensuring that the pitch complies with the relevant guidelines;
- ensuring the readiness of competition areas, including dressing rooms, on matchday;
- ensuring that match reports are properly completed; and
- attending official training sessions at the stadium.

Match Coordinator

The Match Coordinator assists the Match Director with all of their duties throughout the competition, but primarily focuses on team- and competition related matters, as well as match operations.

The Match Coordinator works with the Match Director to maintain contact with the teams at the venue and is responsible for:

- coordinating the TAM and/or technical meetings;
- distributing equipment and documents amongst the participating teams;
- following up on participating team activities (training sessions, media activities, stadium arrival, etc.);
- assisting with the pitch inspection;
- leading the pre-match ceremony and ball crew rehearsals;
- ensuring that the match organisation runs smoothly from the fourth official's bench; and
- fine-tuning the arrangements for the countdown to kick-off.

Competition assistants

Competition assistants are responsible for assisting competition staff with a range of tasks, including the delivery of balls to the participating teams, while they also act as runners to distribute match documentation, etc. Competition assistants are assigned various tasks across the competition by the Pitch Manager and their assistants.

Competition volunteers

Competition volunteers are responsible for refilling the fridges periodically (both those located beside the benches and in other competition areas, including the changing rooms, etc.). Competition volunteers may also be responsible for cleaning the aforementioned areas if an external company is not engaged for the event. The refilling of fridges located in the technical area is a task that shall ideally be carried out between matches or between periods of play where the need is more sporadic. Competition volunteers should also provide support to ensure that match and training balls meet the pressure requirements and are in good condition, while also monitoring the supply of additional balls.

Referee Coordinator

The MA-appointed Referee Coordinator oversees refereeing matters at the event. They attend technical meetings to inform the participating teams of any refereeing related matters, as well as holding their own meetings with the appointed referees to enhance their performance levels and issue specific instructions for subsequent competition days.

2.2 Local Organising Committee/member association

When an MA concludes an agreement with a local authority or promoter to organise a domestic beach soccer competition, the two entities must join forces and combine their staff to create a Local Organising Committee (LOC), which works very closely to, and in conjunction with, the MA's Competitions Department. Regional football associations may also be involved in the organisational structure of the event as part of the LOC.



2.2.1 Local Organising Committee – roles and responsibilities

Competition organisers – either the MA or private entities – set up a LOC in accordance with the host agreement between the competition rights holder and the host (city, region, etc.).

It should be noted that, regardless of the LOC's structure, the MA strongly recommends that it mirror the MA's organisational roles and hierarchy, as this greatly simplifies communication and coordination and increases the likelihood of the delivery of a successful competition. There is no need for such a structure to be created when the event in question is a simple match.

Pitch Manager

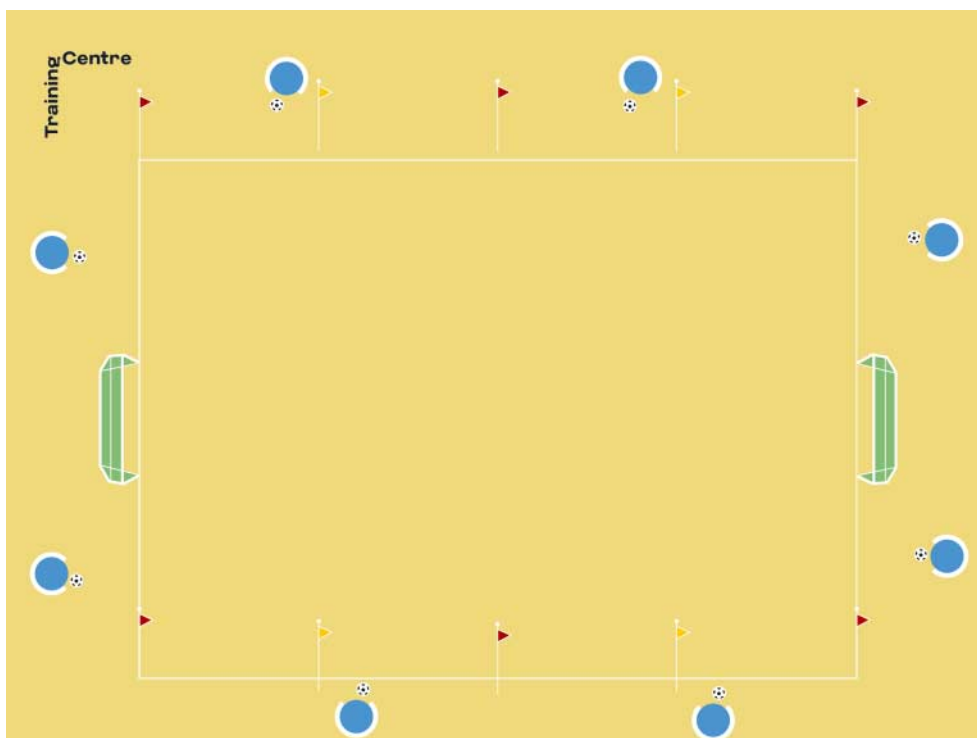
The Pitch Manager works closely with the Match Director and is responsible for the maintenance of the pitch. The Pitch Manager's duties include ensuring that the sand is not too hot for the players and match officials, the flagposts are securely anchored and the goal nets are adequately supported. The Pitch Manager is also responsible for the cleanliness of the playing area and ensuring that access to the competition areas is limited to the necessary staff, while also coordinating team training sessions, etc. The Pitch Manager and Match Directors are supported by assistant pitch managers, whose main responsibility is to assist the Pitch Manager in the delivery of their responsibilities, as well as coordinating activities with the members of the ball crew.

Ball crew

The ball crew play a crucial role in match management and enabling play to continue without interruption. When a ball crosses one of the boundary lines of the pitch, the ball crew member closest to the point at which the ball went out of play must immediately return the ball to avoid any breaks in play. It is essential that the ball crew member make eye contact with the player restarting play to avoid any delays.

The LOC must appoint a ball crew coordinator to coordinate and supervise the activities of the ball crew. The kit worn by ball crew members must comply with the competition kit regulations and be clearly distinguishable from the colours worn by the participating teams and match officials.

Ball crew members should be aged between 12 and 17 and should preferably have an understanding of beach soccer. The Match Director should meet with the ball crew prior to the event to briefly explain the pre match ceremony/protocol procedures and arrange a rehearsal to ensure that the event gets off to a smooth start. The following image shows the positioning of the ball crew around the pitch. A total of ten ball crew members are positioned around the pitch as follows:



As per the image above, two balls are placed behind each boundary line with a further two balls in two corners of the pitch, making a total of ten balls. The most efficient ball crew members should be positioned behind the goal lines, which is where the majority of balls go out of play.

Disc jockey

Part of the uniqueness of beach soccer lies in the fact that matches are played to background music, with entertainment occupying a major role in the modality. The disc jockey (DJ) has an important role to play in creating a vibrant atmosphere throughout the venue. The DJ should ideally have experience of working at sports events. The LOC is required to provide a DJ, who is responsible not only for promoting the event and providing in match entertainment, but also for leveraging the fan experience as much as possible by creating goal jingles, etc.

Speaker

As is the case with the DJ, the speaker has a crucial role to play in creating an exciting atmosphere and interacting with the crowd. The speaker should not commentate on the match, but build a story around the day, engage with spectators and get all stakeholders involved in all events, both on and off the pitch. The speaker's role at a beach soccer event is twofold, encompassing both institutional (team line up announcements, team presentation, etc.) and entertainment (fan engagement segments, games, etc.) aspects.

The speaker should be positioned directly next to the DJ or with within easy visual contact of them and is responsible for introducing the teams and players, announcing the score at regular intervals, delivering all public announcements and engaging the spectators.



3) Competition management

3.1 Pre-event

During the pre-event period, the competition organisers should distribute circulars and official communications amongst the participating teams with information relating to team and disciplinary matters, regulations, the match schedule, the official training schedule and refereeing, etc. Given that several circulars are typically published in the build-up to a competition, they are usually issued in ascending numerical order, i.e. circular no. 1, circular no. 5, etc.

3.1.1 Referees

The MA should appoint a referee coordinator, who is responsible for appointing the referees for the duration of the competition.

3.1.2 Players' and officials' lists

The MA should ideally provide team delegates with access to a digital competition management platform via which to submit the players' and officials' lists.

If the MA does not have such a platform, a centralised document shall be created for the purpose of collecting all of the necessary information relating to players and officials. This document acts as the official players' and officials' list. The team delegates are asked to submit the players' and officials' name and position, as well as the name and number on the player's shirt.

3.1.3 Regulations

As stated above in section 2b, competition regulations regulate the rights, duties and responsibilities of the MA and the participating teams.

3.1.4 Match schedule

The match schedule establishes the kick off times of the matches in the competition and is drawn up on the basis of pitch availability and the competition format. Once the competition format is decided upon, the composition of the groups, determined by the draw, provides the basis to establish the match pairings (who plays who and the order in which the participating teams in each group play each other). Participating teams and possibly TV broadcasters, as well as media representatives, must be informed of the kick-off times of every match and the competition format.

3.1.5 Disciplinary matters

The MA's Director of Competitions determines the basis on which sanctions are applied to participating players in regard to their conduct during a match. For example, they determine whether a player is sanctioned for an accumulation of yellow cards. Ideally, the competition organisers should draw up a disciplinary workflow that avoids players being suspended for the final on account of accumulated yellow cards that are carried over.

The MA should devise a disciplinary code or guidelines in accordance with article 70 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code.

If the MA is unable to produce an ad hoc document, the alternative is to directly apply the disciplinary guidelines issued by international beach soccer entities, with which the players are already familiar on account of their application in international competitions.

3.1.6 Kit colours

Each participating team must inform the MA's Competitions Department of the colours of their playing kits via the competition platform prior to the start of the competition. Each team selects two different and contrasting colours (one predominantly light and one predominantly dark) for each of its first choice (official) and alternative (reserve) team playing kit items (shirt, shorts and socks). The goalkeeper kits must be different and contrasting from each other as well as from the first choice and alternative team kits. After having been informed of the colours of the playing kits, the Competitions Department assigns the playing colours for each team and each match, including the match officials' colour, at a meeting held prior to the start of the competition.

The kit items (shirt, shorts and socks) to be worn in each match, determined on the basis of the information regarding playing colours submitted by each participating team prior to the start of the competition, are allocated in line with the following principles, which should be provided for in the competition regulations:

- 1. Team A shall be given priority to wear their first choice playing kit.**

- 2. Team B shall wear their first choice colours unless they clash with Team A's first-choice colours.**

- 3. Team B shall wear their alternative colours if their first-choice colours clash with Team A's first-choice colours.**

- 4. Team B shall wear a combination of their first-choice and alternative colours if it is necessary to avoid a clash with Team A's first-choice colours.**

- 5. Team A and Team B shall wear a combination of their first-choice and alternative colours if both Team B's first-choice and alternative colours clash with Team A's first-choice colours.**

3.1.7 Official training sessions

All participating teams are entitled to take part in an official training session on the day before the match. Participating teams shall be informed of the official training schedule prior to the start of the competition. Each session shall be at least 45 minutes long, depending on the number of participating teams and pitches. The host team, where applicable, are entitled to state the time at which they wish to train. The official training schedule should be organised on the basis of the team arrivals at the competition host city/region.

3.1.8 Meetings

A number of meetings, primarily involving the participating teams, are held to share relevant competition related information and to ensure that match delivery operations run smoothly. While the meetings may differ in terms of their format, frequency, content and name, they all involve the exchange of relevant information for, and between, participating teams and the competition organisers. It is essential that one meeting be held with all participating teams prior to the start of the competition and at least one meeting be organised with each participating team upon their arrival at the match venue or prior to start of the competition stage.



Pre-competition technical meetings

The MA's Competitions Department is responsible for organising a meeting that is attended by all of the participating teams and MA departments involved in the organisation of the competition, including, but not limited to, the disciplinary, medical, refereeing, media and security departments. This meeting may be organised to coincide with the draw ceremony or any other event related milestone and typically addresses the following:

- 1. Approved competition regulations**

- 2. Competition matters (format, match schedule, kit regulations, draw procedures, etc.)**

- 3. Refereeing matters (BSLOTG)**

- 4. MA/participating teams/host cities – roles and responsibilities**

- 5. Stadiums**

- 6. Disciplinary matters**

- 7. Media matters**

- 8. Medical/doping matters**

- 9. Marketing matters**

- 10. Accreditation and security matters**

- 11. Draw ceremony, if applicable, particularly for round robin competitions**

Coordination meetings: prior to the opening match, each match (round robin) or each stage

The Match Director, in conjunction with the MA's Competitions Department or the LOC, is responsible for organising meetings with the participating teams to ensure that all parties have the necessary information for the successful delivery of matches and the competition. These meetings should take place shortly before the match so as to ensure that the information is as accurate and relevant as possible.

These meetings typically cover the following:

1. **Administrative matters (welcome address delivered by the Match Director and host city)**

2. **Competition matters (format, match schedule, players' list, kit colours, identity checks, official countdown, warm-up procedures, technical area, match ceremonies, official team training sessions)**

3. **Security, accreditation and access matters**

4. **Disciplinary matters**

5. **Refereeing matters (BSLOTG)**

6. **Medical/doping matters**

7. **Marketing matters**

8. **Media matters**

9. **Draw ceremony (if applicable for centrally hosted tournaments)**

10. **Accreditation cards, which are distributed to the participating teams after checks have been carried out regarding the accuracy of the information previously submitted in the players' list or via the online platform. Accreditation cards shall be checked by the Match Director and match official immediately prior to the start of the match.**



3.2 In-event

3.2.2 Documentation

Match report

The match report is a template document to be completed by the referee after each match. It summarises all occurrences of significance, such as misconduct of players leading to caution or expulsion, unsporting behaviour by supporters and/or by officials or any other person acting on behalf of a participating team at the match and any other incident happening before, during and after the match in as much detail as possible. The MA's Competitions Department supplies the referee with the report, which is signed off by the referee and the Match Director.

Kit colours

Kit colour designation should be determined according to the colour contrast criteria defined in the competition regulations and outlined in the technical meeting, as well as the application of the first-choice and alternative team kit criteria. The competition organisers should inform the participating teams of the colours that they will wear for each match on the day before the match. The match colour assignments for each team (outfield players and goalkeepers) and referees' kits must be sent to the teams and referees prior to the matchday.

Each team's first-choice and alternative playing kits should be considered as a solution to correctly combine colours in the event that both teams' first-choice kits do not result in an acceptable colour contrast.



Competition summary

After the completion of each matchday, the competition organisers should share a competition summary with all of the participating teams. This report contains details, and serves as the official communication, of match results, competition standings, kit colours for future matchday, sanctions, etc.

3.2.3 Disciplinary matters

Participating teams should be provided with details of disciplinary sanctions after the completion of every matchday. The MA's Disciplinary Department shall apply the sanctions to players and officials in accordance with the competition regulations regarding disciplinary matters and the disciplinary guidelines.

3.2.4 Pre-match ceremony

The MA shall establish the pre match ceremony protocol for the presentation of the participating teams. The MA is strongly advised to introduce the players and referees on to the pitch with an engaging song as the teams and referees are being announced.

A youth programme involving local children may be activated in which the protocol foresees the display of flags, banners and/or the use of captain/player escorts. The members of the ball crew may also fulfil the aforementioned roles.

3.2.5 Match organisation

The Match Director is responsible for overseeing the following key events and ensuring that they take place in line with the following timings:

- Team arrivals: 90 minutes prior to kick-off

- Pre-match warm-up: from 45 minutes prior to kick-off to 15 minutes prior to kick-off

- Members of ball crew in place for kick-off

- Pre-match ceremony (subject to agreed countdown to kick off arrangements): from seven minutes prior to kick-off to four minutes prior to kick-off

- Countdown to kick-off: 15 seconds prior to kick-off (involves a hand signal from Match Director to referees and broadcasters)

3.3 Post-event

3.3.1 Disciplinary matters

After the completion of the event, the MA's Disciplinary Department issues the participating teams with a list of all of the players and coaches who have incurred disciplinary sanctions to be served in subsequent matches at domestic level. Sanctions are imposed on the player and not on the club or team. If a player is transferred, they must serve their sanction with their new team.

3.3.2 Standings

The final standings detail the position occupied by each of the participating teams after the completion of the competition, based on their performance.

3.3.3 Checklist

A post-event checklist should be drawn up, with tasks including the payment of referees' fees and suppliers, as well as the distribution of lists of sanctioned players and coaches for future competitions.

4) Budget

The competition organisers and LOC should create two parallel budgets to monitor the costs and the potential income generated by the event. Once confirmation has been received that the competition will take place, the organising entities should put together a forecasted budget based on prospective expenses and potential revenues generated from public or private funding, sponsorship sales, media rights, licensing, etc.

Upon concluding a contract, the MA and LOC should clearly outline which costs are to be borne by each party and the commercial opportunities to be exploited by each of them, as well as the applicable terms and conditions (revenue share, etc.).