

GEORGIA INDEPENDENT CHRISTIAN ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION MANUAL (SOCCER)

A. Soccer General Information and Regular Season

1. Coaches Required to Read GICAA manual

All soccer coaches are required to read the following sections of the GICAA manual before the season begins: Fines and Penalties, Calendars, Eligibility, Policies and Procedures for Athletic Competition, Tournaments/Playoffs/Awards, General Sports Information, and the Soccer Section. Coaches are also required to attend the preseason sports meetings.

2. Coaches required to read sportsmanship section

All soccer coaches must read the sportsmanship section of the GICAA manual concerning how to treat other GICAA teams and running up the score on GICAA teams.

3. Calendar

The beginning and ending dates for practice and competition are the GICAA sports calendar.

4. Rules Guidance

The National Federation of High School (NFHS) Rules of Soccer is the official guide of the GICAA. Some exceptions are listed below.

5. Number of Games

GICAA soccer teams can play in 25 regular season games.

6. Duration of games

All varsity games consist of two 40-minute halves.

7. Suspended Game Rule (due to weather or mechanical issues)

- a. According to NFHS, a game is deemed an official legal game once one complete half or more of the game has been played.
- b. If less than one-half of the region game has been played, the game is considered “no contest” and replay will be rescheduled from the start of the game.
- c. Non-region games do not have to be completed.

8. Mercy Rule

- a. If a team is seven or more goals down at the midpoint of the first half, that will be considered the end of the half, and the teams will play a twenty minute second half.
- b. If a team is seven or more goals behind at halftime, the second half will be restricted to twenty minutes.
- c. When a team is ten or more goals behind in the second half, the game will be terminated.

9. Overtime Procedure

For region and state playoff games (non-region games can end in a tie if the teams are in agreement):

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- a. The overtime will consist of two 5-minute periods.
- b. A coin toss shall take place to determine which team will put the ball in play for the first overtime period.
- c. If the score remains tied following the overtime periods, a "shootout" of penalty kicks will determine the winner.

10. Penalty Kick Procedure:

- a. The teams will go into a penalty kick "shootout" immediately after the two five-minute overtime procedure has taken place, if a tie score still exists.
- b. The head referee shall choose the goal at which the penalty kicks will be taken.
- c. Each coach will select any five eligible players (including goalkeeper) to take the kicks.
- d. A coin toss shall be held with the team winning the toss having the choice of kicking first or last.
- e. Teams will alternate kickers, and there is no follow-up on the kicks.
- f. The defending team may change goalkeepers prior to each kick.
- g. Following the five kicks from each team, the teams with the greater number of successful kicks will be given one point and declared the winner.
- h. If the same number of penalty kicks are successful for each team, each coach will select five different eligible players who will kick in a "sudden victory" situation. NOTE: Each team will have an opportunity to kick in each round of the "sudden victory" situation.
- i. If there is no "sudden victory" after the five kicks, keep repeating the process until a winner is determined.

11. Unsportsmanlike Conduct:

- a. Two yellow cards in any game equals a red card and constitutes an ejection. If a coach or player is ejected from a game, he/she must sit out and not attend the next previously scheduled game.

b. Soccer Coaches

- 1) Soccer coaches can receive two cumulative unsportsmanlike yellow cards in a season without further increase in sanctions.
- 2) Third cumulative unsportsmanlike yellow card will require a \$50 fine from the school and one game suspension to be served the following previously scheduled game. The coach cannot attend the suspended game.
- 3) Fourth cumulative unsportsmanlike yellow card mandates a \$100 fine from the school and the coach will not be able to coach anymore for the season.

c. Soccer Players

- 1) Soccer players can receive four cumulative unsportsmanlike yellow cards in a season without further increase in sanctions.
- 2) Fifth cumulative unsportsmanlike yellow card will result in a one game suspension to be served the following previously scheduled game. The player cannot attend the suspended game.
- 3) Sixth cumulative unsportsmanlike yellow card will result in a two game suspension to be served the following previously scheduled two games. The player cannot attend the suspended games.

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4) Seventh cumulative unsportsmanlike yellow card will result in the player being suspended for the remainder of the season.

12. Team Score Reporting:

Every team must report their team scores to the GICAA website within 3 business days of the event or be fined \$50. The website is monitored by the GICAA and fines will be issued for not reporting scores on time.

B. Soccer State Playoffs

1. Read the section in the GICAA Manual about Tournaments, Playoffs, and Awards. It details the state playoff information as well as the revenue and expense information between schools and the GICAA.
2. The number of teams qualifying for the state playoffs will be determined by the GICAA prior to the beginning of the season based on the total number of regions and teams. The state playoff games will either be at the higher seed or a neutral site designated by the GICAA. If two equally ranked seeds meet, then the bracket will determine who will be the home team.