

Soccer

Sport Manual

2026-27 Edition

4.10 Soccer

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4.10.1 Regular Season Procedures

4.10.1.1 Rules of Competition

4.10.1.1.1 Competition Rules. NFHS Soccer Rules, as modified by the FHSAA, are the official rules for all soccer games.

(a) The following modifications to those rules have been adopted by the Board of Directors.

- **4-1-1(d).** Compression/bicycle shorts may be worn under the uniform bottom in accordance with the National Federation rule. Such shorts, however, may not be worn in lieu of the uniform bottom.
- **5-1-1.** The minimum crew size that may be used during a regular season game is two officials (head referee and assistant referee). The use of three officials for regular season games is optional. When three officials are utilized during competition, the Diagonal System of Officiating shall be utilized.
- **6-2-1.** The official time will be kept by a contest official on the field, and if the stadium clock is available, it is unofficial.
  - The official game clock is to be kept on the field by a contest official during the entire game.
  - If there is a display clock available, it can be used, but the displayed time is unofficial.
  - The proper procedure for a display clock is to run the game clock to 0:00 during each half. Do not stop the clock at 2:00.
  - If a display clock is available, throughout the entirety of the contest, the contest official must be sure that the official game time kept on the field is in sync with the display clock.
  - If the display clock and the official game time kept on the field are not in sync, the official must be sure to make the appropriate adjustments to the display clock during the water breaks or any stoppage.
  - Prior to the game, be sure to communicate the clock procedures with the clock operator and the coaches of both teams.
- **7-1-1.** Sub-varsity may play two 30-minute halves upon mutual agreement of opposing schools.
- **7-1-2.** Varsity shall play 40-minute halves and periods may not be shortened.
- **7-1-3.** A soccer game that has completed one-half or more of play is an official game. A game that has been called because of weather or darkness prior to the first half being completed is a suspended game and, if played, shall restart from the point of suspension. (See also the FHSAA "Policy on Inclement Weather.")
- **7-1-5.** Eight (8) goal differential attained at the end of the first half or secured at any point during the second half terminates the game. If an eight (8) differential is reached at any time during the first half, the game clock shall continue to run after goals are scored. Once the game clock starts running due to an eight-goal differential, the game clock must continue to run for the duration of the game.
- **7-3-1.** Regular season games that are tied at the end of regulation play will end as a tie. Games in invitational tournaments that are tied at the end of regulation play may be resolved using an overtime procedure, with the win-loss result of the contest being applied to each team's season record.
- **7-3-2.** There will be a five-minute interval between the second half and the first of the two overtime periods and a two-minute interval between the overtime periods.

4.10.1.1.2 Timeouts. There shall be a one-minute timeout in each half for re-hydration of players and for coaches to deal with player situations. Players shall remain on the field and there shall be no delay in substitution. Substitutes may enter per NFHS Rule 3-3-1. The timeout shall occur when there is a stoppage immediately prior to or after the 20-minute mark at the discretion of the referee when there is no immediate offensive scoring opportunity.

4.10.1.1.3 Card System for Misconduct. Administration of the Card System for Misconduct in all contests must be administered as written in the NFHS Soccer Rulebook.

(a) The "Blue Card" will no longer be used during high school soccer games.

(b) All Red Card ejections will be followed by a minimum one (1) game suspension in accordance with FHSAA Policy 30.

(1) Exception: Situations in the categories below will be considered game disqualifications (not an ejection) and will not require a mandatory suspension:
- Denying an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity (DOGSO).
- 2nd Caution for a player, provided it does not involve inappropriate language, profanity, or violent conduct (i.e., punching, pushing/shoving, spitting, etc.).
- The FHSAA Executive Director, or his/her designee, has sole discretion to determine whether an offense is followed by a suspension.

4.10.1.1.4 Overtime Procedure. The overtime procedure to be used in the Florida High School State Championship Series, as well as invitational tournament games, is as follows (Note: schools hosting invitational tournaments during the regular season may use this overtime procedure or go directly to penalty kicks:

(a) Following a five-minute interval, there shall be **two (2)** 10-minute overtime periods. A coin toss as specified in NFHS Rule 5-2-2(d)(3) shall be held in advance of this overtime period. After the end of the first 10-minute overtime period the teams shall change ends of the field and a second 10-minute overtime period shall be played after a two-minute interval. The team with more goals at the conclusion of the second overtime shall be declared the winner of the contest.

(b) If a tie still exists following the second overtime period, the head coaches and team captains for both teams will meet with the officials at the halfway line to review the procedure for penalty kicks as follows:
(1) The referee will choose the goal at which all of the kicks from the penalty line will be taken.
(2) Each coach will select any five players, including the goalkeeper, on or off the field (except those who may have been disqualified) to take the penalty kicks.
(3) A coin toss will be held as in NFHS Rule 5-2-2(d)(3). The team winning the toss will have the choice of kicking first or second.
(4) Teams will alternate kickers. There is no follow-up on the kick.
(5) The defending team may change the goalkeeper prior to each penalty kick.
(6) The team scoring the greatest number of these kicks will be declared the winner.
(7) Add one goal to the winning team score and credit the team with a victory. An asterisk [*] may be placed by the team advancing to indicate the advancement was the result of a tie-breaker system.

(c) If the score remains tied after each team has had five penalty kicks:
(1) Each coach will select five different players than the first five who already have kicked to take the kicks in a sudden victory situation, wherein if one team scores and the other team does not score, the game is ended without more kicks being taken. If a team has fewer than 10 available players at the end of the first set of kicks from the penalty mark due to either injuries or disqualification, the coach must use all players who have not participated in the first five kicks. The coach may choose additional players from the first five kickers to ensure that five different players participate in the second set of kicks.
(2) If the score remains tied, continue the sudden victory kicks with the coach selecting any five players to take the next set of alternating kicks. If a tie remains, repeat 4.10.1.1.4 (c)(1)

(d) The Misconduct Procedure as listed in 12-9 in the NFHS Rules Book shall be in effect during the penalty kick phase of overtime.

4.10.1.1.5 Suspended Contest. A suspended contest shall be resumed from the point of interruption under the provisions of NFHS Rule 7-1-3.

4.10.2 Florida High School State Championship Series Procedures

4.10.2.1 District Meeting

4.10.2.1.1 Meeting Agenda. See Administrative Procedure 3.4.1.

4.10.2.2 Tournament Structure and Time Schedules

4.10.2.2.1 District Tournament

(a) Tournament Structure. Each district bracket and seeding will be determined by the FHSAA office, based on the latest rankings as posted on FHSAA.com.

(b) **Time Schedule.** Each district will determine the time schedule for its tournament at the district meeting.

(c) **Site.** Each district will determine a site for its tournament at the district meeting.

4.10.2.2.2 Open Division and Regional Tournaments

(a) **Open Division.** The top eight (8) teams in the overall rankings after the conclusion of the district tournaments will be pulled to compete in the Open Division Championship Tournament. All other schools will qualify for regional tournaments based on criteria listed in FHSAA Administrative Procedures 3.3.1.
(1) Open Division Complex. See Administrative Procedure 3.3.1.1.1.3.

(b) **Complexes.** Competition will be conducted in four regional complexes in each classification as follows:
(1) All Classes. Districts 1-4 will comprise the Region 1 complex, Districts 5-8 the Region 2 complex, Districts 9-12 the Region 3 complex, and Districts 13-16 the Region 4 complex. The champion of each of the 4 district tournaments in each region complex and the next 4 highest-ranked teams in each of the 4 region complexes shall advance to one of the four regional tournaments in each classification to which they are assigned. One tournament will be conducted in each regional complex.

(c) **Time Schedule.** Times for all regional tournament games must be 7 p.m. local time unless approved by the FHSAA Office.

4.10.2.2.3 Florida High School State Championship Tournament

(a) **Schedule.** The Finals schedule will be posted on FHSAA.com.

(b) **Bracketing.** See Administrative Procedure 3.3.3.

(c) **Coaches Packet.** A coach's packet will be available on FHSAA.com. The head coach of each participating team is required to view the information prior to their scheduled semifinal game.

4.10.2.2.4 Advancement of Winners

(a) **District to Regional.** The champion of the 16 district tournaments and the next 4 highest-ranked teams in each of the 4 regions shall advance to one of the four regional tournaments in each classification to which they are assigned. See Administrative Procedure 3 for additional details.
**Note: If a district champion finishes in the top eight (8) and places into the Open Division, the next highest-ranked team within that regional bracket, based on the final rankings as posted on FHSAA.com, will qualify as an at-large team.

(b) **Regional to State Semifinals.** The champion from each of the four regional tournaments in each classification shall advance to the State Semifinals. See Administrative Procedure 3 for additional details.

(c) **State Semifinals to Florida High School State Championship.** The two champions of the State Semifinals will advance to the Florida High School State Championship.

4.10.2.3 Tournament Regulations

4.10.2.3.1 Squads. A school participating in the FHSAA State Soccer Series may dress up to twenty-five (25) players in uniform and eight (8) team personnel on the team bench. Credentials, or complimentary admission, shall be provided to participating school personnel as follows:

(a) Eligible players in uniform - 25

(b) Team support (coaches, administration, managers, athletic trainers, etc.) - 8

(c) School-based media - 2

- During the State Championship Tournament only, two (2) credentials per team will be available at the pass gate for pickup by the qualifying team's Athletic Director.

4.10.2.3.2 Pregame Warm-up and Procedures. The following pregame time schedule shall be followed in all Florida High School State Championship Series games

First Game of Session and Championship Games

Time to Start	Protocol	Game Clock
37:00	Set game clock to 20 minutes and start; both teams permitted on the game field for warm-up.	20:00
22:00	Captains and officials meet.	5:00
17:00	Teams report to sidelines.	0:00
14:00	Teams (Players and coaches) and officials proceed together in line to midfield.	_ _ _
13:00	Introduction of players, coaches and officials. As player's name is called he/she steps forward then back into line. Visiting team non-starters, then starters, then assistant coaches, then head coach. Home team non-starters, then starters, then assistant coaches, then head coach. Introduction of officials.	_ _ _
7:00	Opening Remarks/Moment of Reflection	_ _ _

5:00	National Anthem	_ _ _
2:00	Introductions end; final preparations.	_ _ _
0:00	Reset clock to 40:00; to begin game.	_ _ _

Subsequent Games of Session

Time to Start	Protocol	Game Clock
34:00	Set game clock to 20 minutes and start; both teams permitted on the game field for warm-up.	20:00
19:00	Captains and officials meet.	5:00
14:00	Teams report to sidelines.	0:00
11:00	Teams (Players and coaches) and officials proceed together in line to midfield.	_ _ _
10:00	Introduction of players, coaches and officials. As player's name is called he/she steps forward then back into line. Visiting team non-starters, then starters, then assistant coaches, then head coach. Home team non-starters, then starters, then assistant coaches, then head coach. Introduction of officials.	_ _ _
4:00	Opening Remarks/Moment of Reflection	_ _ _
2:00	Introductions end; final preparations.	_ _ _
0:00	Reset clock to 40:00; to begin game.	_ _ _

Unless both participating teams mutually agree for additional warm-up times prior to the respective contest, no participating team, other than the host school's team, shall be permitted on the competition field for practice outside of the 20-minute pre-game warm-up period, during the week of the respective Florida High School State Championship Series contest. During the State Championships Tournament, the FHSAA office will establish the appropriate pre-game warm-up schedule for the State Championship Tournament.

4.10.2.3.3 Tie Games. All Florida High School State Championship Series games must be played to completion. Tie games will be resolved in accordance with the procedure outlined in 4.10.1.1.4.

4.10.2.3.4 Bands. Bands will not be permitted to play at games in the Florida High School State Championship Series.

4.10.3 Team Information and Up-to-Date Statistics on MaxPreps and Media Information

4.10.3.1 Team Information and Up-to-Date Statistics on MaxPreps. As per Administrative Procedure 3.9.1, schools that advance to the regional round in the Florida High School State Championship Series must update team information and have up-to-date cumulative statistics on MaxPreps or the FHSAA's designated official scores and statistics provider. The roster must be up-to-date with name, jersey number, grade, height, positions, and bio. The coaching staff information must be up-to-date. The team preview must be filled out with team strengths, top returning players, and top newcomers. Additionally, the school team and history must be complete with a school and team description, coaching records, and season achievements. The statistics required are as follows: For field players; Name, Jersey Number, Games Played, Goals Scored, and Assists. For goalkeepers; Name, Jersey Number, Minutes Played, Goals Allowed, and Shutouts. The deadline for completion is no later than noon EDT the day of the game for each round participating in the Florida High School State Championship Series.

4.10.3.2 Media Information Form. As per Administrative Procedure 3.9.2, schools whose teams qualify to advance to the Florida High School State Championship Series state semifinals and/or state finals event(s) must report by noon EDT on the Monday following the team's qualifying victory, up-to-date cumulative statistics through the end of the regional tournament and additional information by completing the "Media Information Form".