



2025 Indiana Crossroads Invitational

Homeschool Soccer Tournament

Rules & Regulations

Opening Statement

While this document outlines rules, expectations, and structures to support the Indiana Crossroads Invitational, its ultimate purpose is to preserve the integrity and joy of homeschool sports. These guidelines exist to protect the opportunity for homeschooled athletes to compete honorably, and for teams to build community and character through sport.

We recognize that competitive drive is a natural and celebrated part of athletics, but that drive must never come at the cost of fairness, sportsmanship, or the heart behind these efforts. If you find yourself wondering whether a decision is technically allowed or how to stretch one of these rules, we encourage you to step back and ask what reflects the spirit of this Invitational.

Asking questions or seeking clarity before making decisions is not only encouraged, it's appreciated. We look forward to making this a joyful, memorable experience along with you for all of our teams, players, and families.

Section 1: Mission Statement

The **Indiana Crossroads Invitational** exists to provide homeschool athletes with a Christ-centered, competitive soccer experience rooted in faith, integrity, fostering skill development, and lasting relationships, while glorifying God through sportsmanship, teamwork, and a Christ-like spirit in every interaction on and off the field.

Section 2: Player Eligibility

2.1 Homeschool Designation

The Indiana Crossroads Invitational defines homeschooling as an educational approach where parents or legal guardians take primary responsibility for directing their child's education, typically conducted at home. Parents or legal guardians oversee their child's education by making key decisions, including:

1. Selecting and approving curriculum, course materials, and study schedules.
2. Providing instruction or selecting tutors, co-ops, teachers, or dual enrollment options.
3. Managing graduation requirements and overall educational goals.

Parents or legal guardians must maintain primary responsibility for their child's education, even when utilizing additional resources or external support. This ensures that parents or legal guardians remain directly involved in their child's learning, fulfilling the role of headmaster or primary educational authority. Players must be considered a homeschool student prior to their first regular season game and must remain continuously homeschooled through the remainder of the season leading up to the first day of the Invitational to be eligible.

2.2 Gender Eligibility

Female players are eligible to play in all divisions. Male players are eligible to play in all divisions except those designated as Girls-specific divisions. Player gender is determined by the gender recorded on their original birth certificate.

2.3 Player Ineligibility

If any player is determined to be ineligible by the Invitational Committee, the player will not be allowed to participate in the Indiana Crossroads Invitational. Any tournament games in which the ineligible player participated may require forfeiture, as decided by the Invitational Committee. The player and/or their team may also face suspension from future participation in the Indiana Crossroads Invitational.

2.4 Graduation and Age Requirements

Student-athletes who have formally graduated from high school, participated in a high school graduation ceremony, or completed their entire high school course of study are no longer eligible to participate in the Indiana Crossroads Invitational, regardless of age. Each student-athlete is allowed a maximum of six years of eligibility to participate on a 19U division roster. All players must meet the following age requirements as of the first day of the Indiana Crossroads Invitational:

- 2.4.1 Players in the 19U Division must be at least 13 years old and no older than 19 years.
- 2.4.2 Players in the 14U Division must be 14 years old or younger.
- 2.4.3 Players in the 11U Division must be at least 8 years old and no older than 11 years.

Section 3: Team Eligibility

3.1 Division Participation

Players who start and log more than 50% of minutes for a respective team are not permitted to play in a lower division, regardless of their age qualifications. Programs with two teams in the same division must lock their players to a single team roster no later than September 10.

3.2 Multi-Team Participation

Players may participate on multiple team rosters within the same organization during the Indiana Crossroads Invitational, provided they meet the age qualifications for each respective team.

3.3 Roster Size

Teams may have a maximum roster of 24 players.

3.4 Eligibility Approval

Teams must meet all eligibility requirements and receive approval from the Indiana Crossroads Invitational Committee to participate.

3.5 Roster Submission Deadline

Each team must submit its complete roster to the Indiana Crossroads Invitational Committee no later than September 10. Only players listed on the submitted roster will be eligible to participate, unless a change is subsequently approved by the Committee.

3.6 Required Roster Information

The roster submission must include the team name, player first and last names, jersey numbers, birth month/year of each player, dual roster status, and exemption status. This information ensures accurate eligibility tracking and seeding for the event.

3.7 Roster Changes

Any changes to a team's roster after initial submission must be submitted immediately to the Indiana Crossroads Invitational Committee. All change requests are to be approved at the sole discretion of the Committee.

3.8 Player Jersey Numbers

Players must wear their assigned jersey number as designated in the team's roster submission unless disclosed to the opposing team prior to the match with the player's parent or legal guardian present during the disclosure. Players are only allowed to change jerseys in the middle of a match if their jersey becomes compromised (e.g., torn or heavily soiled) and must disclose the change to a game official.

Section 4: Exceptions and Hardships

4.1 Committee Review Process

All requests for exceptions or hardships must be submitted in writing to the Indiana Crossroads

Invitational Committee. Programs are strongly encouraged to submit requests well in advance of this tournament to allow sufficient time for review and follow-up if needed. Eligibility or hardship exceptions must be approved before a player or team participates in any Indiana Crossroads Invitational match. The Committee will evaluate each request on a case-by-case basis and notify the program representative in writing.

4.2 Player Eligibility Exceptions

Exceptions to player eligibility requirements (e.g., homeschool designation, age limits) may be granted in rare circumstances where significant hardship can be demonstrated. Each team is permitted up to two roster positions for student-athletes whose homeschool designation may be unclear or who attend a school that does not offer the sport of soccer. This ensures alignment with the Invitational's commitment to homeschool-focused competition while allowing flexibility for unique circumstances. These two roster positions must be submitted in accordance with section 4.1.

4.3 Final Authority

Decisions regarding exceptions and hardships are made solely by the Indiana Crossroads Invitational Committee and are considered final. Appeals may only be submitted in the case of new evidence or circumstances not originally presented in the request.

Section 5: Player and Coach Behavior

5.1 Code of Conduct

All players and coaches participating in the Indiana Crossroads Invitational are expected to uphold the highest standards of sportsmanship, integrity, and respect both on and off the field. Any behavior that undermines the values of the Invitational may result in disciplinary action. Sportsmanship is always encouraged by all parties, including players, coaches, parents, and spectators.

5.2 Respect for Officials and Opponents

5.2.1 Players and coaches must show respect toward referees, opposing players, coaches, and spectators at all times.

5.2.2 Altercations with referees will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary measures, including warnings or ejection from the tournament.

5.3 Prohibited Behavior

5.3.1 The use of offensive, discriminatory, or abusive language or gestures is strictly prohibited.

5.3.2 Physical altercations, whether intentional or retaliatory, may result in immediate removal from the game and possible suspension for the remainder of the Invitational.

5.3.3 Coaches, team representatives, and program volunteers must not incite or encourage unsportsmanlike behavior among players, spectators, or others involved in the game.

5.3.4 Coaches, parents, or adults are strictly prohibited from correcting or confronting the

opposing team's players, fans, or children at any time. Concerns must be directed to the team's coach or officials.

5.4 Responsibilities of Coaches

5.4.1 Coaches are responsible for modeling good sportsmanship and ensuring their players adhere to Invitational rules and conduct standards.

5.4.2 Coaches must address any issues of player misconduct immediately and report them to the Invitational Committee if necessary.

5.4.3 Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their team's parents and/or fans during games. Any disruptive, unsportsmanlike, or abusive behavior from parents or fans must be managed by the coach, athletic director, or program president promptly. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action against the team.

5.5 Disciplinary Action

5.5.1 The Invitational Committee reserves the right to impose disciplinary actions, including warnings, game suspensions, team forfeitures, and disqualifications, based on the severity of the behavior.

5.5.2 Appeals for disciplinary decisions must be submitted immediately to the Invitational Committee.

5.6 Red Card / Ejection Policy

Players or coaches who receive a red card, whether from an immediate offense or through yellow card accumulation, will be ejected from the current match and suspended from participating in their team's next scheduled match, including placement or championship games. The ejected player may not be replaced, and the team must continue with one fewer player for the remainder of the match where the offense took place. Invitational Committee officials reserve the right to extend the suspension for serious misconduct such as violent conduct, fighting, or abusive language, in order to preserve the safety, fairness, and integrity of the event. Suspensions may also be reviewed and reduced upon appeal at the discretion of the Invitational Committee. All red cards must be clearly communicated by the officiating crew and recorded on the official game card for review and enforcement.

Section 6: Tournament Format and Rules

6.1 General

IHSAA rules with games on a running clock unless extended stoppage happens. Time stoppage per the discretion of and communicated by referees. The new IHSAA 5/9 Mercy Rule will not be used for this tournament. For all games except championship games, the game will end with a tied score; no extra time or PK's. All divisions will use seeding and align with the correct format for each division size. The

home team provides game balls and wears dark jerseys. The away team wears white (or lighter colored) jerseys.

6.2 Pre-Invitational Seeding & Divisions

Teams will be seeded based on their regular season record, strength of schedule, and overall roster competitiveness, as determined by the Indiana Crossroads Invitational Committee. Seeding is designed to be fair and to ensure balanced competition throughout the event. While teams may indicate a preferred division or seeding, final division/seeding placement is determined solely by the Committee and is not guaranteed.

6.3 Divisions and Structure

The following division and tournament format structure will be used to accommodate the number of registered teams and their competitive level.

6.3.1 Five-Team Divisions (Boys 19U D1, Girls 19U, 14U D1)

All games (excluding championship first place games) are 30 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime. Championship games are 35 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime. In five-team divisions, Seed 1 receives one bye and plays Seeds 4 and 5, while Seeds 2–5 each play three pool games. Standings are determined by points per game (PPG), calculated as Total Points divided by Games Played. After pool play, the top two seeds advance to the Championship, the third and fourth seeds meet in a 3rd Place match, and the fifth seed does not play a fourth match.

6.3.2 Four-Team Divisions (Boys 19U D2, 14U D2)

All games (excluding championship first place games) are 30 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime. Championship games are 35 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime. In four-team divisions, all teams play a round robin schedule of three pool games. After pool play, the top two seeds advance to the Championship, while the third and fourth seeds meet in a 3rd Place match. Each team plays four matches in total.

6.3.3 11U Division

All games will consist of 30-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime. The 11U division will feature seven total teams. Each team will play three pool games (with the exception of teams receiving byes). Byes are distributed to accommodate the seven-team format. Following the completion of pool play, standings will be determined using points per game (PPG) and the tournament's standard tie-breaking procedures. Placement games will take place on Saturday afternoon. The top two teams overall will compete in the 11U D1 Championship, the next two teams will play in the 11U D1 3rd Place match, and the fifth- and sixth-place teams will meet in the 11U D2 Championship. The seventh-place team will not play in a placement match, though an optional exhibition may be scheduled if time and agreed team participation allows.

6.4 Pool Play and Seeding for Playoffs

Results from pool play will be used to determine seeding for placement games. Teams will be ranked within their pools based on the pool play scoring system.

6.5 Pool Play Scoring System

Teams will earn points during pool play as follows:

- 3 points for a win
- 1 point for a tie (regardless of score)
- 0 points for a loss

**See PPG pool play scoring in section 6.3 for 5 division teams*

6.6 Forfeits in pool play

In the event of a forfeit during pool play, the result will be applied differently depending on the division size. In three- and four-team divisions, the non-forfeiting team will be awarded three points for the win, and the match will be recorded as a 3–0 result. This scoreline will also be applied to all applicable tie-breaking procedures. In five-team divisions, however, no points will be awarded for forfeited matches; standings will instead be determined solely by the points earned in games actually played, using a points-per-game calculation. Any team that forfeits a pool or placement game may only continue in the tournament ****at the discretion of the Invitational Committee****. The Committee reserves the right to remove a forfeiting team from further competition if doing so is necessary to protect the fairness and integrity of the event.

6.7 Pool Play Tie Breaker System

In divisions where teams do not face all other pool opponents (such as divisions with byes or forfeits), criteria 2 through 5 will be applied only using results against common opponents. If the tie remains after these steps, a shoot-out will be held following tournament procedures. In the event of a tie in pool standings, the following criteria will be applied in order until the tie is resolved:

1. Head-to-head result (if played)
2. Goal differential (maximum of 3 per game, *common opponents only)
3. Fewest goals allowed (*common opponents only)
4. Most goals scored (maximum of 3 per game, *common opponents only)
5. Most shutouts (*common opponents only)
6. **Shoot-out.** If the tie remains after these steps, a shoot-out will be held. If a shoot-out were to take place, any player can be selected, regardless of whether on the field or not. Three kickers per team will alternate. If tied after three each, one per team will be selected until the tie is broken. The kickers can be anyone who is dressed to play and rostered. Kickers cannot be repeated until each rostered player has had his or her turn to shoot.

6.8 Division Championship Tie Game Procedure

If the final division placement match (championship) for the #1 team vs. the #2 teams are tied at the end of regulation, one 10-minute golden-goal extra time period will be played for 19U and 14U divisions, one 5-minute golden-goal extra time for the 11U division. If the match is still tied after extra time, kicks from the mark (penalty kicks) will determine the winner. Anyone on the roster who has not been ejected (Red Card) may kick. The first five kickers shall be designated by each coach. The second five kickers (if necessary) must be different from the first five kickers and will be designated by each coach. If the score is still tied after the first 5 kickers, sudden death will begin with the second 5 kickers. Each team will get a

chance to kick each time. If one team scores and the other team misses, the game is over. All players eligible to kick must attempt a kick before starting over.

6.9 Non-championship (consolation) Tie Game Procedure

If a non-championship placement game (consolation) should end in a tie, both teams share final placement results (i.e Co-3rd place).

6.10 Weather Delays and Lightning Protocol

In the event that thunder is heard or lightning is observed by officials or the Indiana Crossroads Invitational Committee, all play will be suspended immediately in accordance with NFHS lightning safety guidelines. Participants will be directed to seek shelter in a safe location such as a vehicle or building. Play may not resume until at least 30 minutes have passed since the last observation of thunder or lightning.

6.11 Safety and Scheduling Adjustments

In the event of inclement weather, unsafe field conditions, or other unforeseen disruptions, the Indiana Crossroads Invitational Committee reserves the authority to take any of the following actions:

- Relocate or reschedule games
- Modify the length or structure of games
- Cancel preliminary games or reduce the number of scheduled games
- Revise the playoff advancement format as necessary

6.12 Suspended Games

If a game is suspended before the end of the first half, every effort will be made to reschedule the match if it impacts tournament advancement. If rescheduled, the match will resume from the point of suspension, maintaining the same score and time remaining.

6.13 Cancelled Games

If a game is terminated after the completion of the first half, it will be considered official, and the score at the time of termination will stand as final.