



2026 ARMED FORCES MEN'S AND WOMEN'S FLAG FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

1. **COMPETITION RULES**. Under the auspices of the International Federation of American Football (IFAF) for five vs. five (5 v 5) play following the current USA Football 5V5 Flag Football Rulebook and as amended by the Armed Forces Sports Council (AFSC).
2. **GAME BALL**. Per current USA Football rules for both men and women. Hosting Service shall publish the most current ball-type within the Letter of Instruction (LOI) at least 60 days prior to the championship.
3. **TOURNAMENT FORMAT**. Double round robin followed by championship and consolation games.
4. **DRAW**: As determined by established annual draw.
5. **FINAL TEAM STANDINGS**. Based on results of championship and consolation games.
6. **DURATION OF GAMES AND TIE-BREAKER POLICY**.
 - a. Game length consists of two (2), 20-minute halves with a five (5) minute halftime, using a Running Clock during round robin games and the Pro Clock Settings during the Championship and Consolation Games. Each team has two (2) 30-second timeouts per half.
 - b. Tournament Play Overtime.
 - 1) A coin flip will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.
 - a) If a second round of overtime must be played, the team that lost the coin toss will get to choose offense or defense for the start of the second round of overtime. This process continues with teams alternating who choose to be on offense or defense to start out during every round of overtime.
 - b) The official will determine on which end of the field the overtime will take place.
 - 2) Each team will take turns getting one (1) play from the defense's 5-yard line for one point or the defense's 10-yard line for two points.
 - 3) All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
 - 4) There are no timeouts in overtime.
 - c. Teams will not play more than three (3) games per day for safety reasons.
 - d. Tie Breaking procedures. The following procedures, in order, will be used to break any ties at the conclusion of round-robin play:
 - 1) Head-to-Head record.
 - 2) Points for/against differential of the games played between the tied teams.

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3) Points for/against differential of all games played by tied teams.

7. FACILITY, EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL.

a. IAW current USA Flag Football Rules. Players must wear rubber-soled shoes. Cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed.

b. All players must be provided with an official flag belt and team jersey. Flag belts cannot be the same color as shorts or pants.

c. Jerseys.

1) must be tucked into shorts/pants if they hang below the belt line.

2) Home teams shall have priority declaring uniform colors. Both teams shall declare their uniform colors at the organizational meeting.

3) Uniforms for the Championship and Consolation Games will be determined by the higher seeded team from the round-robin having priority.

4) Players must retain the same jersey number throughout the tournament.

d. All players must wear mouth guards while on the playing field.

e. Field dimensions are 25 x 70 yards in total with two (2) 10-yard end zones and a 50-yard field of play.

f. No-run zone in effect. No-run zone is a 5-yard imaginary zone before the end zone. Teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be passing plays, even with a handoff.

g. If a player is ejected from the game due to conduct, that player is ineligible for the remaining games of the championship, and the overall roster is reduced by one. This player is now a non-participant, cannot remain on the sidelines, and will not be considered for the All-Tournament Team. Teams may not substitute ejected players with reserve players.

h. Reserve Players

1) Reserve players are only eligible to play should a member of the 12-player roster become injured.

2) Should a player become injured the player may be replaced from the approved reserve player pool, provided the injury is certified by the team's medical staff.

3) Injured players that are replaced by reserve players are not eligible to return to competition in the event their condition improves.

4) Reserve players are not permitted in the team bench area unless they are also officially designated as a staff member on official roster. Staff members include Head coach, Assistant Coach, OIC, and Ad libitum. Medical personnel cannot be designated as reserve players.

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5) All reserve players are required to have a uniform with a unique number not duplicated by any other athlete.

i. If a player is ejected from the tournament, that player is ineligible for the remaining matches of the championship and the overall roster is reduced by one. This player is now a non-participant, cannot remain on the sidelines, and will not be considered for the All-Tournament Team.

j. Media personnel are not authorized in the field of play unless directed by the Armed Forces Sports staff during approved breaks.

8. PROTESTS. Protests on rules or eligibility are handled by the protest committee. The protest committee consisting of Service representatives and Chief of Officials will only accept protests when they are submitted in accordance with USA Football rules. Protests must be resolved before a contest can continue.

9. OFFICIATING PROBLEMS:

a. Teams are allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team is charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout is not charged, and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call. A team with no timeout remaining cannot challenge a rule interpretation, though officials can come together independently and reverse a call by unanimous decision.

b. Incidents or issues related to an official at an event will be addressed with the head official immediately, through the Armed Forces Sports representative onsite. If not addressed immediately, Services should inform the AFSCS about problems occurred with official(s) within 30 days after the conclusion of the championship. When the championship is conducted in conjunction within a civilian tournament, officiating issues will be addressed in accordance with the tournament rules/guidelines.

10. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (As determined by the Host Organizers).

- a. Day One Teams Arrive
 Team Practice Sessions (if teams are available)
 Organizational Meeting
 Opening Ceremony Walk-Through (one rep from each team if required)
 Team Check-In

Note: Authorized team members must attend Organizational Meeting and Team Check-In in their Service polo shirt, coordinated slacks, and appropriate footwear.

- b. Day Two Team Photos
 Opening Ceremony (Optional) - However, all Service flags to include the Space Force and Coast Guard flags shall be displayed or posted with colors. If all Service flags are not available, then only the American flag and host Service flag shall be displayed.

Round Robin Begins

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Game 1	Army vs USAF (M)
Game 2	Army vs USAF (W)
Game 3	Navy vs USMC (M)
Game 4	Navy vs USMC (W)
Game 5	USMC vs USAF (M)
Game 6	USMC vs USAF (W)
Game 7	Army vs Navy (M)
Game 8	Army vs Navy (W)

c. Day Three Round Robin Continues

Game 9	USMC vs Army (M)
Game 10	USMC vs Army (W)
Game 11	USAF vs Navy (M)
Game 12	USAF vs Navy (W)
Game 13	USMC vs Navy (M)
Game 14	USMC vs Navy (W)
Game 15	USAF vs Army (M)
Game 16	USAF vs Army (W)

d. Day Four Round Robin Continues

Game 17	Navy vs Army (M)
Game 18	Navy vs Army (W)
Game 19	USAF vs USMC (M)
Game 20	USAF vs USMC (W)
Game 21	Navy vs USAF (M)
Game 22	Navy vs USAF (W)
Game 23	Army vs USMC (M)
Game 24	Army vs USMC (W)

e. Day Five Competition Continues (Championship and Consolation Games)

Game 25	Consolation Game Seed 4 vs Seed 3 (M)
Game 26	Consolation Game Seed 4 vs Seed 3 (W)
Game 27	Championship Game Seed 2 vs Seed 1 (M)
Game 28	Championship Game Seed 2 vs Seed 1 (W)

Team Awards Ceremony

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All-Tournament Team selection meeting

Awards Ceremony - (Immediately following the final game) Service teams will wear Service warm-ups or competitive uniforms at the awards ceremony. Individual athletes who do not comply will not receive awards or be selected to the Armed Forces team. If the Awards ceremony is conducted as a separate function in conjunction with the Ice Breaker Social, then all Service Members must with Ice-Breaker Dress Policy. Footwear shall be at the discretion of the attending Service Representatives.

f. Day Six Teams Depart

11. AWARDS

a. Individual: Each member of the winning and runner-up teams (to include the coaches, team trainer and OIC) receive individual awards.

b. Team: No team trophy is presented.

c. All-Tournament Team:

1. See selection process in paragraph (13) for All-Tournament Team selection procedures.

2. All-Tournament will have a minimum of one (1) quarterback. The remaining positions will be determined based on best play.

12. TEAM COMPOSITION - ARMED FORCES CHAMPIONSHIP AND HIGHER LEVEL:

Roster not to exceed 20 individuals*

12 Players

2 Reserve Players

1 Coach

1 Asst Coach

1 Certified Athletic Trainer/Physician*

1 Ad Libitum

1 OIC/Team Manager

TOTAL: 19

* Medical personnel listed on roster must be trained medical providers and properly certified/licensed. Teams are not authorized to substitute for this position with an additional coach, statistician, or reserve player. Personnel failing to provide appropriate credentials (if challenged) shall be deemed unauthorized and removed from the bench.

Note: Rosters must be submitted NLT four days prior to championship report date. Only the above personnel (not including reserve players) are authorized in the designated bench areas.

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13. SELECTION PROCESS - HIGHER LEVEL AND ALL-TOURNAMENT.

a. Athlete Selection Process.

1) The AFSWG members, or designated Service representatives, at the site of the Armed Forces Championship are responsible for the selection of the All-Tournament Team and the U.S. Armed Forces Team for higher-level competition.

a) The All-Tournament team shall consist of five players. One (1) quarterback is required at a minimum for the All-Tournament Team. The remaining roster shall be determined based on the best players.

2) The host Service shall ensure all Higher Advancement forms (appendix c) have been completed and signed electronically to the Armed Forces Sports Office at the conclusion of the organization meeting. The host Service will provide Service representatives with a list of participants unavailable to advance to higher-level competition.

3) Service representatives and coaches are required to assess all athletes regardless of Service affiliation and select the most qualified athletes for the All-Tournament and U.S. Armed Forces Teams. Service representatives must ensure that all appropriate player positions are selected.

4) Service representatives are required to submit the All-Tournament Team and U.S. Armed Forces Team ballots electronically to the Armed Forces Sports representative on site (appendix E) the evening prior to the selection meeting, or as determined by the Armed Forces Sports representative.

5) Service Representatives, coaches, and any designated voting delegates may not vote for athletes from the Service they represent when submitting All-Tournament or Armed Forces Team ballots. Ballots containing votes for athletes from the voter's own Service will be considered invalid and returned for correction.

6) Athletes selected to the All-Tournament Team shall automatically be selected to the Armed Forces Team unless unavailable. The most competent athletes, regardless of Service affiliation, shall be selected to complete the final Armed Forces Team roster. Applicable exception is addressed in paragraph 8.d.(4).

7) The Armed Forces Sports Representative shall chair the selection meeting. If the Armed Forces Sports Representative is not in attendance, then the host Service shall chair the selection meeting.

8) The Armed Forces Sports Representative will compile the results of the ballots and present the results to the Service representatives at the start of the selection meeting. In the event of ties, the Armed Forces Sports Representative shall lead the Service representatives through objective discussions and conduct two re-votes on the tied individuals. The Armed Forces Sports Representative shall break the remaining tie(s).

9) Selection meeting attendance is limited to the Service Representative and the Service Head Coach. Each Service authorizes one spokesperson during the meeting.

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10) All discussions within the meeting shall remain confidential. Selections of athletes shall be released at the designated awards ceremony.

11) When higher-level team sports competition does not immediately follow the Armed Forces championship and athletes withdraw from higher competition, the head coach may nominate replacement players of the specific positions vacated with AFSWG concurrence. Replacement players must have played at the Armed Forces Championship, have completed the Higher Advancement Form (appendix C), have necessary training completed for country/theater clearance, and have the required travel documents (passport/visa when applicable).

14. FORMS AND ROSTERS.

a. All final rosters and code of conduct forms shall be submitted in accordance with the deadlines established in the LOI for each respective sport and shall be submitted electronically to the Armed Forces Sports representative. Failure to provide rosters will result in the Service disqualified from participating in the Armed Forces Championship.

b. All athletes and coaches shall complete and sign the Armed Forces Sports Higher Advancement Form (appendix C) electronically for consideration of selection to the Armed Forces Team. All Higher Advancement Forms must be submitted by the Officer in Charge of the respective Service at or before the organizational meeting at the Armed Forces Championship. Teams advancing to higher-level competitions shall not exceed the number of allocations specified for each sport per appendix (B). Failure to do so shall disqualify athletes from advancing to higher level competition.

c. All athletes, coaches and staff from each Service must sign the Armed Forces Sports Participant Code of Conduct (appendix D) in order to participate at the Armed Forces Championship, higher level competition, and CISM events. The Code of Conduct shall be submitted at the start of the Organizational Meeting, or electronically prior to the Organizational Meeting. If a training camp to higher level competition is conducted without the conduct of an Armed Forces Championship, then Team Captains shall have all participants sign the Code of Conduct immediately upon arrival and prior to any official activity. If an Armed Forces Championship or training camp is not conducted prior to, the Team Captain shall collect the Code of Conduct forms electronically prior to the delegation's departure to higher level competition. Failure to do so shall disqualify athletes from competing at the Armed Forces Championship and advancing to higher level competition.

d. Team Captains, Coaches and Chiefs of Mission shall sign their respective LOI (appendix G/I).

e. Athletes advancing to higher level competition must sign the anti-doping declaration form (appendix L), if applicable.

f. All eligible participants advancing to higher-level competition must complete country/theater clearance trainings per the Foreign Clearance Guide, with Service representative submitting the completed spreadsheet to AFSCS prior to the start of the organization meeting.

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g. All forms are available on the Armed Forces Sports Website at:
www.armedforcessports.defense.gov

15. **ALCOHOL POLICY**. There will be no alcohol consumption at the sports venue by personnel involved in the Armed Forces Sports competition, higher level competition and CISM competition, including sports staff, until all competition for the day has been completed to include the award ceremony on the final day if the awards banquet immediately follows the event. The venue is defined as the playing area, venue parking lot, and the assigned eating/spectator area. This policy will not apply if the awards banquet or ceremony is conducted as a separate event. However, more restrictive installation policies regarding alcohol will take precedence. Violation of this policy shall result in immediate suspension from the remaining championship/event, disqualification from higher-level competition and selection to the All-Tournament Team and shall be subject to further administrative actions by the AFSWG.

16. **TOBACCO POLICY**. All competitors and staff shall refrain from the use of tobacco related products, including cigarettes, vaping, chewing tobacco, and other smokeless forms at the competition site. Use of these products shall comply with local installation policies and shall only occur in designated areas.

17. **ICEBREAKER SOCIAL**.

a. Ice-breaker social shall be conducted at all Armed Forces Championships. Food/beverages are optional depending on the availability of funding/authorizations. If the event is conducted outside of a military installation, then the ice-breaker social shall be optional.

b. Authorized team members must attend the event in their Service polo or logo shirt, coordinated slacks, and appropriate footwear (exceptions may be made dependent on host site letter of instruction). Guests may attend with pre-coordination with the host site and Service representative. Final decision will be based on availability. Guests will assume costs associated with attending the ice breaker.

c. The Ice-Breaker Social is an official function and shall be conducted in accordance with local installation policies and all participants are expected to conduct themselves in the highest professional manner. Informal activities such as skits, hazing and other activities that include offensive language/behavior are not authorized.

18. **HANDLING OF RULE VIOLATIONS**. If there is a violation of the SOP, code of conduct or specific sport rules, the AFS Representative or in their absence, the project officer, will address the respective Service Representative to resolve the issue. Service Representative will resolve the violation before the Service competes in the next game. All code of conduct violations shall be handled according to the Armed Forces SOP (Paragraph 8.b.(4)(f)).

19. **SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**.

a. All Armed Forces Sports shall comply with the safety procedures prescribed by USA Football. Service Branches are encouraged to bring their own medical personnel with them to the competition.

b. When hosted by a Service branch, an ambulance is required on-site during competition due to the risk of injury.