



# 2026 Heartbreaker Cup Tournament Rules

Strikers FC third annual futsal tournament hosted January 30-Feb 1 2026 in Missoula, MT.

## Entry Deadline

The entry deadline for all fees and paperwork is 11:59 pm on Monday, January 28, 2026. Other arrangements can be made through contacting the Tournament Director (chris.essman@strikersfcmt.org).

## Refund Policy

Teams withdrawing after January 28, 2026 will forfeit their entire entry fee. All teams not accepted into the tournament will receive a full refund. In the event of cancellation of the tournament, 90% of fees will be returned.

## General Facility Rules

No pets allowed at any tournament game site (service animals excluded). If supporters of a team refuse to remove a pet when asked by a tournament official, the Tournament Director may forfeit the game for the team with the supporters. No alcoholic beverages allowed at any tournament game site. No food or beverage (besides water) is allowed in school gyms.

## Check In

All teams must upload their team roster to EventConnect profile by Wednesday January 28 11:59pm; otherwise they will not be permitted to play. No check-in is necessary. Teams must do the following:

- Teams must have the appropriate tournament roster sent to Tournament Director Chris Essman (chris.essman@strikersfcmt.org) or uploaded to EventConnect prior to the first tournament game.
- Player cards do not need to be presented.

## Teams

1. The play format will be 5v5 (4 field players, 1 goalkeeper). The maximum roster size for each team is 10; the minimum is 4.

2. The Tournament Director can approve exceptions to the roster size rule. Please contact the Tournament Director for permission.

3. Each team be able to represent two sets of uniforms (differing colors) to each game. Bibs work. Numbers are not required on uniforms but are appreciated. The home team wears dark uniform; the away team wears light. In the event of a conflict the home team will be required to change colors.

4. The tournament will provide the game balls. They are official size 4 futsal balls.

5. Player equipment:

· Shin guards are required for all players (no exceptions).

· No cleats, flats only. Players with cleats will not be allowed to play. Turf shoes are allowed.

Casts: Casts are permitted with soft wrapping upon the permission of the referee. The Tournament Director should be contacted beforehand in the case of a player expected to play with a cast but the ultimate authority of playing with a cast will be with the referee.

### Player Eligibility

All players are eligible to play in their age division (including guest players). The Tournament Director can approve exceptions for play-ups or play-downs. Any exceptions must be in writing and must be approved. Players can only play on one team in his/her respective age group unless team needs a dual-rostered player for roster health. Teams must get permission from Tournament Director to dual-roster a player. Players can play on a second team in an older division (but not younger – unless Tournament Director approves).

### Tournament Facilities

Here are the following gym locations where games will be played:

- Washington Middle School (645 W Central Ave, Missoula, MT 59801)
- CS Porter Middle School (2510 Central Ave, Missoula, MT 59804)
- Russell Elementary School (3216 S Russell St, Missoula, MT 59801)
- Chief Charlo Elementary School (5600 Longview Dr, Missoula, MT 59803)
- Big Sky High School (3100 South Ave West, Missoula, MT 59804)
- Cold Spring School (2635 Briggs St, Missoula, MT 59803)
- Mount Jumbo School (735 Michigan Ave, Missoula, MT 59802)

### Futsal Rules

**These rules are in accordance with US Youth Futsal.**

### **General Rules**

Teams may call one one-minute timeout per half (when in possession of ball, ball out of play). There is no injury time or stoppage time – running clock.  
Teams are comprised of four outfield players and one goalkeeper.  
The goalkeeper must wear a different color jersey than the outfield players.  
There are no offsides in futsal.

## **Substitutions**

All substitutions are on the fly, this includes goalkeeping substitutions. Referees will not stop play for goalkeeping substitutions. A substitute may not enter the pitch until the player leaving the pitch leaves through the substitution zone in front of his teams' bench. Any substitute who enters the pitch before the player being replaced has completely left the field of play may be shown a yellow card. All substitutions must take place through the substitution zone in front of his teams' bench -- *not* at the half-way line.

## **Restarts**

### **Kickoffs:**

A goal may be scored directly against the opponents from the kick-off. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves. Tapped balls are not in play – the ball must move.

**Kick-ins:** are indirect. The ball must be placed on the line and the kick must be taken within 4 seconds. (A kick-in that goes directly in the opposing goal is a goal clearance for the opposing team. A Kick-in that goes directly in the defensive goal is a corner kick of the opposing team.) If the kick-in does not enter the pitch or if the kick is not taken within 4 seconds the kick-in is taken by the opposing team.

**Goal Clearances:** are taken when the ball wholly crosses the goal line and not under the crossbar and between the goalposts and after being touched last by the attacking team. The ball is thrown or released from any point within the penalty area by the goalkeeper of the defending team. The ball is in play when it is thrown or released and clearly moves. This includes a goalkeeper dropping the ball at his/her feet. The ball must be put into play within four seconds of the team being ready to put the ball into play or the referee signalling that the team is ready to put it into play. Opponents must be outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.

**Corner Kicks:** are direct. The ball must be placed directly on the corner arc and the kick must be taken within 4 seconds. If the kick is not taken within 4 seconds the restart becomes a goal clearance for the opposing team.

**Free Kicks:** may be indirect or direct. The ball must be stationary before the kick may be taken.

**Penalty Kicks:** are taken from the penalty spot and must be taken by a clearly identified kicker. Defenders may not be nearer to the ball than 16 feet and even or behind the ball when the kick is taken.

## **Fouls and Misconduct**

**Indirect Free Kicks:** When a player plays in a dangerous manner, impedes an opponent, prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball with her hands, goalkeeper takes more than 4 seconds to release the ball when in possession in his own half, plays the ball again within his own half after releasing the ball and the ball doesn't touch an opponent or has gone out of play, or commits any offense for which play is stopped to caution or eject a player.

**Direct Free Kicks:** When a player kicks an opponent, tackles an opponent, trips an opponent, jumps at an opponent, charges an opponent, strikes an opponent, pushes an opponent, holds an opponent, spits at an opponent or handles the ball deliberately.

**Yellow Card / Caution:** The offending player is shown a yellow card. If a player is shown two yellow cards in a match, he is shown a red card.

**Red Card / send-off:** The offending team plays with one less player for two full game minutes or unless scored upon before the two-minute penalty expires. The offending player serves a minimum one-match suspension.

**Penalty Spot:** Placed at the top of the penalty area line.

**Advantage:** Advantage is applied in Futsal.

## **The Goalkeeper**

- Must wear a different color shirt.
- He/She may wear long pants and/or other padding as deemed safe by the match referee.
- Takes the goal clearances (i.e. goal kicks) with the ball starting in one's hands. He/she can drop the ball to his/her feet, at which point the play is live.
- GKs cannot punt
- May receive a kick-in directly.
- May kick the ball directly over the half-way line.
- May score directly with his/her feet during the run of play.
- May throw the ball directly across the half-way line.
- May not score a goal by using the hands (cannot throw or hit the ball directly into the goal)

Tournament Format:

### Game Duration

The duration of the matches shall be as follows:

1. 2007-2016: two 20 minute halves, with 5 minute halftime (45 minute games)

All games will have a five-minute halftime unless shortened by the authority of the Tournament Director. If the start time of a game is more than 15 minutes behind schedule, the Tournament Director may make the decision to shorten the game. He will do so by informing the coaches, prior to the start of the game, if the game time will need to be shortened by 5 minutes for each half.

### Reporting of Scores

Referees are responsible for the game and will report the score of all games to the Ref Assignor. The Ref Assignor report scores to the Tournament Director for record.

### Division Formats:

Group of 4: 3 group stage games, a 1st place final, and 3rd place final.

Group of 5: 4 group stage games for total points.

Group of 6: 2 groups of 3 for 2 group stage games and 1 crossover match. Leads to 1st place, 3rd place, and 5th place final with other group.

Group of 7: 4 games of round robin for total points.

Group of 8: 3 group stage games and 1 placement match (1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th).

### Point System

A point system shall be employed to determine the order of finish in group play, as follows:

1. Three points for a win
2. One point for a tie
3. Zero points for a loss

The team with the most points in group play will be the winner of the group; the rest of the teams shall finish in the order of most points.

If teams are equal in points, then tie-breakers, in order of importance, shall be:

1. Head-to Head Competition
2. Goal Differential (max of 7 per game)
3. Goals For
4. Goals Against

If the tie-breaker fails to determine a winner, a coin toss will decide the winner (or penalty kicks at discretion of Tournament Director). When selecting more than one team using the tie breaking rules, the tie breaking rules will be re-applied from the beginning after each team is selected.

Note: In the case of a "Bye" because of no show or cancellation, a score of 3-0 (3 points) will be awarded to the winning team. (The Tournament Director will make every effort to try to find a replacement team when a cancellation occurs.)

### Forfeits

- A forfeiture may occur when a team does not arrive by the scheduled starting time for a match or not having the minimum number of players present. The tournament director may choose not to forfeit a game due to extenuating circumstances.
- The minimum number of players required to start play will be based on FIFA Laws of the Game.
- A team that forfeits a match will be permitted to proceed in the tournament if qualified to do so.

The Tournament Director has the authority to modify or waive these rules in unusual circumstances for any game(s), which have not yet begun. Any modification, waiver, or failure to enforce any of these rules of competition does not require the granting of further modification, waiver, or lack of enforcement.

### Overtime

During group play and consolation matches, a draw shall stand as played. In the semi-finals and finals, matches will proceed to a 10 minute golden goal period. If the game is still tied after the 10 minute period, the game will go to a penalty shootout.

### Team sidelines

Both teams are to be located on the same side of the field with spectators on the opposite side of the field of the teams.

### Conduct

All coaches have total responsibility for the conduct of their players, coaching staff, and team spectators. At no time shall foul or abusive language or misconduct be permitted at any field or other facilities being used for the tournament. Coaches who are either unable or unwilling to control themselves or their sidelines may be cautioned or sent off. The referee will file a written report with the Tournament Director. A copy of the report and a statement of any action will be sent to the respective association office.

### Red and Yellow Cards

The Tournament Director will review the decision of any player, coach or bench personnel sent-off or dismissed (red card) from a game. That person may not participate in the team's next game of the tournament, unless the Tournament Director permits otherwise. If the offense is of a serious nature, the Tournament Director reserves the right to impose a suspension. If a player is sent off a second time, the Tournament Director has the right to suspend the player for the remainder of the tournament.

Any player, coach or bench personnel sent off for violent conduct may not participate in any further games of the tournament and will be referred to their state or national association for further sanctions.

If a player, coach or bench personnel participates in any game for which they are suspended, his or her team shall forfeit that game and the player or coach may not participate in an additional game of the tournament. A coach who is suspended will not be present on the coaching sidelines at any game for which they are suspended, unless the Tournament Director permits.

### Protests

Only coaches may protest a misconduct report or the outcome of a match. The referee of the match must be notified immediately after the match concludes and the coach must follow-up within sixty (60) minutes after the match. Protests are submitted to the Tournament Director at Tournament Headquarters for consideration (Washington Middle School). The Tournament Director will have final authority on all matters related to them.

#### Notes:

- Protests for receipt of a red card will only be considered in the event of a misapplication of the Laws of Play for suspensions greater than one game.
- Protest of game outcomes will be considered only in the case of overage or suspended players or the clear misapplication of the Laws of Play by a referee.
- Protests involving referee judgment will not be accepted.
- All protests not involving misconducts will be reviewed by the tournament Director.

### Solicitation of Players

No coach or person may solicit the recruitment of another player outside of one's club at any point during the duration of the tournament. If such an instance is reported to the Tournament Director, the director will assess the appropriate punishment for the offense, including the suspension of the person from the tournament.

### Termination of Play

If in the opinion of the referee, game play must be terminated for misconduct of the coach, players and/or spectators, the offending team will be charged with a loss and the score will be determined by the Tournament Director. If, in the opinion of the referee, both teams are offending, the game will be terminated and the Tournament Director will determine the score. If a game is terminated due to weather or unsafe field conditions (as determined by the referee), the score of the game at the time of the termination will be the official game score.