



THE RULES

NORTH EAST SIKH TOURNAMENT 2025



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1. PLAYER IDENTIFICATION & VERIFICATION

As per the guidelines of the North East Sikh Tournament, all participants must be Sikh, as confirmed in the Team Registration Form and verified by the organising committee.

All players must be verified prior to the tournament with a valid form of identification, such as a passport or driver's license. The completed registration forms must be submitted by **Tuesday 13th May 2025 by 8:00pm**.

These forms will be reviewed and securely stored by our GDPR-compliant officer, Gurbhinder Sanghera who is authorised to handle sensitive identification information, ensuring that your data is managed professionally and securely.

We understand that player availability may change as the tournament date approaches, and extenuating circumstances could prevent a player from being able to attend.

Therefore, each team will be allowed to make up to three player substitutions during the tournament Welcome Registration process on **Saturday 17th May 2025 between 8:30am and 9:30am**. These substitutions will be verified to ensure consistency as per the original registration process, and all necessary documentation will be checked.

In the event of any complications or verification issues, we may request additional evidence. We also recognise that some players may have parents or grandparents from different religious or caste backgrounds and will be considerate of this aspect during the verification process.

In the event of any complications, we kindly request that all players bring their ID, as specified in the team registration form. Additionally, if any player needs to provide further supporting documentation to verify their eligibility as a Sikh participant, we ask that they bring the necessary paperwork with them.

Our goal is to ensure a smooth registration process and avoid any delays on the day of the tournament. As an organising committee, we are committed to ensuring that the game is played fairly by all individuals and teams. We have taken all necessary steps on our end to prevent complications, and we trust that this will help maintain the integrity of the tournament along with the reputation of the event and a seamless, dispute-free day are our top priorities.

IT'S ESSENTIAL THAT EVERY PLAYER ON EACH TEAM HAS THEIR ID WITH THEM ON THE DAY OF THE EVENT

2. PLAYER & MATCH TERMS

- A team can **ONLY** have a maximum of **10 PLAYERS** for any one game – 7 players, of which one must be a goalkeeper, and 3 substitutes. Only six players plus a goalkeeper on the field at any one time.
- A minimum of 5 players are required for the game to go ahead. Team may play a match with a total of four players plus goalkeeper, any less is a forfeit.
- All matches will commence at the scheduled kick-off time. Each team must be on the field with a minimum five players ready for kick-off at their designated time. Game shall commence immediately at the scheduled kick off time. Failure to adhere to this will result in forfeit and a 3-0 win to the opposition team.
- All players must be 16 years and over.
- All players are required to wear the team squad numbered wristband during all games as provided at the welcome registration. Failure to provide proof of this to the referee will mean you can't play in that match.
- All Players are advised to wear shin guards - players playing without shin pads play at their own risk.
- Footwear Moulded boots or Astro turf trainers, no metal studs are permitted. Any players wearing metal studs will not be permitted to play, until their footwear is compliant.
- All field players must wear matching shirts, while the goalkeeper must wear a distinctly different colour to clearly differentiate them from both teammates and opponents.
- If there is a kit colour clash during a match, the away team, as indicated on the match sheet, will be required to wear bibs to differentiate themselves from the home team.
- In the event of a clash between the referee/officials and either team's kit, the referee will wear a bib to avoid any confusion.
- Shirts do not need to be numbered (team squad numbered wristband is required to be worn by each player)
- Substitutions: Teams must obtain the Referees permission to enact an interchange. The oncoming Player cannot enter the field of play until the outgoing Player has completely left the field of play. All interchanges must be made at halfway point on the side of the field where the team officials are located.

3. MATCH DURATION

GROUP STAGES:

Each match will consist of two halves of 8 minutes each, with a turnaround half time interval, making a total duration of 16 minutes game time.

LAST 16, QUARTER FINALS, AND SEMI FINALS:

These matches will also consist of two halves of 8 minutes each, with a turnaround half time interval, making a total of 16 minutes game time. If the match ends in a draw, it will proceed directly to a penalty shootout, with sudden death if necessary to determine the winner.

GRAND FINAL:

The final match will consist of two halves of 10 minutes each, with a turnaround half time interval, making a total duration of 20 minutes game time. If the game ends in a draw, it will proceed to two halves of 5 minutes each, with a half time interval, making a total duration of 10 minutes. If still a draw we will go to a penalty shootout, with sudden death if necessary to determine the winner.

4. FOULS, MISCONDUCT & DISCIPLINE

The referee will deal with all fouls and misconduct which will be punished accordingly.

Slide tackling is strictly prohibited. Persistent slide tackling may result in a sin bin or a straight red card for failure to adhere to the rules of the game.

Please respect the referee, remember the cause you are playing for. Dissent will not be tolerated.

All refereeing decisions are final.

- **Yellow Card:** A yellow card results in a 3-minute sin bin. This penalty applies for cynical fouls committed anywhere on the pitch. Referee will instruct when player returns to the pitch on his timer.
- **Second Yellow Card:** A second sin bin during the same match will result in a red card and the respective player will miss the next scheduled game.
- **Straight Red Cards:** A straight red card will be issued for violent conduct or the use of abusive language towards the referees, resulting in immediate expulsion from the tournament.
- **Players, Manager and Team Officials Conduct:** Players, substitutes, team officials and managers are expected to support their team positively and behave responsibly towards others.

5. GENERAL PLAYING RULES

- **Goalkeeper Distribution and Area Rules:** These are consistent with the standard 11-a-side football rules.
- **Back Pass Rule:** The back pass rule applies. If a back pass is made and the goalkeeper picks up the ball, a free kick will be awarded to the attacking team 2 yards outside the penalty area.
- **Penalty Area:** Any player is permitted inside the penalty area. If a defending player commits an offence within the penalty area, a penalty kick will be awarded. The player taking the penalty kick is allowed to take as many steps as necessary when executing the shot. The goalkeeper must remain on the goal line with one foot grounded until the penalty taker has struck the ball.
- **Kick-ins:** When the ball crosses the sideline, play will restart with a kick-in (no throw-ins). A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick-in.
- **Free Kicks:** Any free kick is direct and the defending team must retreat at least 5 yards from the ball (where possible).
- **Corners:** Corners will be marked and taken in the usual manner.
- **Kick-off:** A goal may be scored directly from any kick-off.
- **Offside:** There are no offside rules in this tournament.
- **Head Height:** There are no head height restrictions.
- **Penalty Shoot-Out:** In the event that a match proceeds to a penalty shoot-out to determine the winner, the following rules apply: The 7 players that finish the match are the only players that can be nominated to take a penalty. The referee must be informed of the five selected players and their order of execution. If the shoot-out progresses to sudden death, the remaining players who have not yet taken a penalty will be called upon. Again, the referee must be notified of the players and the order in which they will take their penalties. If the winner is still not determined after this round, the process will repeat as per the original order until a winner is decided.
- **Other Rules:** For all other situations, the Laws of Association Football will apply.

6. TOURNAMENT CONDUCT GUIDELINES

To ensure a safe, respectful, and enjoyable environment for all participants, the following rules must be adhered to by spectators, teams, team officials, and players throughout the tournament:

On Pitch Access:

- Only players, substitutes, and team officials (e.g., managers, coaches) are permitted on the pitch during the tournament. Spectators, parents, or other individuals are strictly prohibited from entering the field of play.
- Supporters should engage in a respectful and inclusive manner, fostering a positive atmosphere. Offensive, insulting, or abusive language and behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Spectators who fail to adhere to these expectations may be asked to leave the premises, along with any dependents, and may be reported accordingly.
- A verbal warning will be issued to anyone seen on the pitch without permission.
- Continued violation of this rule will result in the individual being asked to leave the venue permanently.

Respect and Behaviour:

- All individuals present at the tournament must act in a respectful and sportsmanlike manner at all times.
- Participants should demonstrate respect for officials, opponents, teammates, and spectators.
- Abusive language, aggressive behavior, or disrespectful actions will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Adherence to Local Rules and Regulations:

- Everyone must comply with the specific rules and regulations of the venue, including safety guidelines and any venue-specific policies.
- Please be mindful of the tournament schedule, and follow any instructions provided by event organisers or officials.

Tolerance and Understanding:

- We require all participants and spectators to be tolerant and understanding of others.
- Differences of opinion, cultural backgrounds, and personal experiences should be respected, fostering a positive and inclusive atmosphere.

General Conduct:

- Please ensure that all actions and behaviour align with the spirit of fair play and community.
- Respect for everyone, including players, officials, and other spectators, is paramount in maintaining a welcoming and harmonious environment.

7. TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE & FORMAT

TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

- 4 groups of 5 teams each (Groups A to D).
- Teams in each group play each other once (round-robin) - every team plays 4 matches
- Top 4 teams from each group automatically qualify for the Round of 16 (16 teams).
- 4 teams will be eliminated from the competition after the group games.

TOURNAMENT SUPPORT & COORDINATION

Tournament Group Coordinators will be available throughout the group stage to assist teams with match scheduling, pitch locations, and any logistical needs on the day. They will ensure every team knows exactly when and where they are playing.

If you have any questions regarding the tournament schedule or general event information, please don't hesitate to speak with your assigned representative.

You'll meet your representative during the morning registration and welcome process.

We're here to support every team throughout the tournament experience—whether it's guidance, scheduling, or general assistance, our team is fully committed to ensuring you feel informed, supported, and focused on the game.

KNOCKOUT STAGE

Round of 16 (Single Elimination)

16 teams → 8 winners

Quarter-Finals

8 teams → 4 winners

Semi-Finals

4 teams → 2 winners

Grand Final

8. PITCH DIMENSIONS

For a 7-a-side match on a 3G pitch (artificial turf), the general pitch dimensions and requirements typically follow guidelines set by Football Associations, but they can vary slightly depending on the specific league or competition.

Pitch Dimensions:

- Length: 60 to 70 meters (197 to 230 feet)
- Width: 40 to 50 meters (131 to 164 feet)
- Below is a typical layout of 7-a-side pitch with illustrated dimensions

Key Areas:

- Penalty Area: 12 meters (39 feet) from the goal line, and 16 meters (52 feet) in width.
- Goal Area: 6 meters (19.7 feet) from the goal line, and 10 meters (32.8 feet) in width.
- Center Circle: 7-meter (23 feet) radius from the center spot.
- Penalty Spot: 8 meters (26.2 feet) from the goal line.

Goals:

- Goal Size: 5 meters (16.5 feet) wide by 2 meters (6.6 feet) high.

Surface:

- 3G Turf: A synthetic pitch with a rubber crumb surface, designed to mimic the feel of natural grass.

Additional Requirements:

- Lines and Markings: All standard lines will be clearly marked, including the center line, penalty areas, and the goal areas.
- Safety Requirements: The pitch is well-maintained, and the artificial turf is in good condition to prevent injuries.



9. REFEREES AND OFFICIALS

We are proud to announce that the referees and officials for the tournament will be of full FA standard, sourced from our trusted partner, the **Durham County Football Association**.

This partnership ensures that all games will be officiated by highly qualified and experienced referees, providing a fair and professional environment for all participants.

Officiating Structure:

- **Group Stage:** Each group stage match will be officiated by a single referee. The referee will be responsible for managing the game, ensuring that the rules are followed, and maintaining the flow of the match.
- **Knockout Stages:** In the knockout phase, each game will be officiated by a referee and an assistant referee. This structure will ensure that key decisions, are made with precision and fairness.
- **Semi Finals and Grand Final:** The semi finals and grand final will be officiated by a team of referee and assistant referees to ensure the highest level of accuracy and professionalism for the biggest games of the tournament.

Referee Management:

All referees on the day will be managed by our Head of Referees, who will oversee the officiating team and ensure that all officials are fully supported. The Head of Referees will be the point of contact for any queries or concerns relating to refereeing and will provide regular reports throughout the tournament.

Code of Conduct:

We hold all participants to the highest standards of conduct during the tournament. Violence, abusive language, or any form of misconduct towards the referees will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Referees have the full authority to take immediate action against anyone displaying inappropriate behavior, including issuing yellow or red cards, or even removing players from the game.

It is important to remember that the referee's decision is final. Referees are responsible for maintaining order, fairness, and safety throughout each match. Disrespecting the officials or challenging their decisions disrupts the integrity of the tournament and will not be allowed.

We encourage all teams to respect the referees and work together to ensure that the North East Sikh Tournament remains a positive, competitive, and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

