



## USA TEAM HANDBALL

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### *Competition Rule Book*

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## Contents

Preliminary information.....	4
Article I. Participant Registration and Eligibility.....	5
Section 1.01 Player Eligibility .....	5
Section 1.02 Participant Registration.....	6
Section 1.03 Club/Team Regulations and Standards .....	6
Article II. Code of Conduct.....	7
Section 2.01 Application .....	7
Section 2.02 Authority to Implement the Rules and Code at Events .....	7
Section 2.03 Unacceptable Behavior during USATH Sanctioned Event .....	7
Section 2.04 Referees' Obligations in Event of Direct Disqualification .....	7
Section 2.05 Minimum Recommended Penalties for Violations .....	8
Section 2.06 Recommended Actions for Inappropriate Out-of-Game Conduct.....	8
Section 2.07 Safe Sport Commitment.....	8
Article III. Rules of the Game .....	9
Section 3.01 Application of the Rules .....	9
Section 3.02 Exemptions .....	9
Section 3.03 Copies of the Rules .....	9
Article IV. USATH Regional Structure, Qualifiers, and Leagues .....	10
Section 4.01 Regions .....	10
Section 4.02 USATH Regional Qualification Process .....	11
Section 4.03 Regional Leagues and Local Competitions.....	11
Article V. USATH Sanctioned Events Involving Domestic Teams .....	12
Section 5.01 Authority.....	12
Section 5.02 Eligibility and Exemptions.....	12
Section 5.03 Rights and Responsibilities of the Host Organization.....	12
Section 5.04 Sanctioning Process .....	12
Section 5.05 Participation in Sanctioned Events.....	13
Section 5.06 Violation(s) .....	14
Section 5.07 Minimum Venue Requirements .....	14
Section 5.08 Minimum Game Scheduling Requirements .....	16
Section 5.09 Minimum Athletic Trainer/Medical Care.....	17
Section 5.10 Hospitality and Communication .....	17
Article VI. USATH Open Championships .....	18
Section 6.01 Open Club ELITE divisions.....	18
Section 6.02 Open Club OPEN divisions .....	20
Section 6.03 Open College Championships.....	20
Section 6.04 Open High School Championships .....	21



Section 6.05	Roster size requirements .....	21
Section 6.06	Table Area, Table Officials and USATH Delegates .....	22
Section 6.07	Sportsmanship and Performance Bonds.....	22
Section 6.08	Rules for Foreign Teams Interested in Competing in the USATH Nationals.....	22
Section 6.09	Seeding .....	22
Article VII.	USATH National Cup.....	23
Section 7.01	Purpose and Overview .....	23
Section 7.02	Competition Format .....	23
Section 7.03	Section 7.03 – Championship and Qualification.....	24
Section 7.04	Roster and Eligibility .....	24
Section 7.05	Registration and Fees .....	25
Section 7.06	Hosting and Bid Procedures.....	26
Section 7.07	Gender Divisions .....	26
Article VIII.	USATH Beach Handball National Cup.....	26
Section 8.01	Article Definitions .....	26
Section 8.02	Structure of the BNC .....	27
Section 8.03	Point System .....	27
Section 8.04	Team Registration Requirements.....	27
Section 8.05	Host Eligibility and Requirements.....	27
Section 8.06	Tournament Standards .....	28
Section 8.07	Sample Bid Application Information .....	28
Article IX.	Complaint(s).....	29
Section 9.01	Complaint Procedure for in-game offenses.....	29
Section 9.02	Complaint Procedure for out-of-game offenses .....	29
Article X.	Violations, Strikes and Sanctions .....	29
Section 10.01	Strikes .....	29
Section 10.02	Forfeit of the Game.....	29
Section 10.03	Disciplinary Sanction(s).....	29
Section 10.04	Actions that Warrant Immediate Sanctions.....	30
Section 10.05	Additional Sanctions.....	30
Section 10.06	Appeals .....	30
Article XI.	Amendments, Conflicts and Interpretations .....	30
Section 11.01	Amendments .....	30
Section 11.02	Conflicts or Interpretation Issues .....	30
Section 11.03	Effective Date and Transition, Proposed Rule Changes.....	30



## Preliminary information

### Mission

The Mission of the USA Team Handball (USATH) will be to develop, promote, educate and grow the sport of Team Handball at all levels in the United States and to enable United States athletes to achieve sustained competitive excellence by winning medals in international and Olympic competition.

### Foreword

The USA Team Handball (USATH) Rule Book regulates all team handball structures, organizations and activities in the USA. The publication of and amendments made to this Rule Book are aimed at facilitating sanctioning and promoting competition, to help boost the development of team handball at a Local, Regional, and National level and defining structures that provide for safety and quality across all participant interactions. The competitions that are overseen under the authority of the USATH CC and this rule book are not considered as selection events for the USA National Team; any reference to Sanctioned Competitions in promulgated USATH National Team Selection Procedures are meant to include Sanctioned Events as additional, of several, observational and/or evaluation opportunities. As such, these competitions are not awarded a protected status that would confer upon athletes any rights of participation which would supersede the qualification rules contained herein.

### Abbreviations

- **TD** - Technical Director
- **CEO** – Chief Executive Officer
- **LOC** - Local Organizing Committee
- **EM** - Event Manager (representing sponsoring team or club or LOC)
- **EDC** - Event Disciplinary Committee
- **CC** – Competition Committee
- **NRC** – USATH National Referee Committee

### Definitions

- **Event Manager (EM)**

LOC representative who has the ultimate decision-making authority for specific sanctioned event and is responsible for compliance with USATH rules and regulations.

- **Local Organizing Committee (LOC)**

An organization of individuals (teams, clubs, community-based entities) that work together to host, promote and/or stage USATH sanctioned events.

- **Competition Committee (CC)**

The appointed group of representatives that oversees the sanctioning, exemptions and qualification requirements for USATH sanctioned events.

- **Maximum Roster Size**

The highest number of players that a team can bring to and use in USATH sanctioned championships event.

- **Minimum Roster Size**



The lowest number of players that a team can enter USATH sanctioned championship event without losing its Performance Bond.

- **Club Roster**

The list of players who actively participate in club practices or games.

- **Season**

The USA Team Handball Indoor Season begins on the Tuesday after Labor Day and ends on Labor Day of the following year.

- **“In writing”**

A letter mailed or electronically transmitted (email); however, the sender must confirm any email that has been received by intended recipient.

- **Qualifying Match**

Any match, sanctioned by USATH as a single contest or part of a larger tournament or league competition, played in accordance with all IHF rules except:

- Participating teams cannot be part of the same club, unless roster integrity is established at the beginning of the season and maintained throughout the season for the purpose of entering two separate teams from one club for sanctioned local events, regional qualifiers and/or meeting the minimum games standard for USATH Open Club Championships.
- Halves may be as short as 25min without additional approval. In the event that scheduling requires the organizer to schedule games with 20min halves, approval can be given by a representative of the CC, provided the crossover and final games are regulation length.
- Court may be as short as 35 meters and as narrow as 19m.
- Each match must be officiated by two (2) USATH certified referee, except for games where the NRC is observing newer referees as part of their training/certification process.
- Match has to be played within season’s timetable/deadlines.
- Interior dimensions of a goal must meet IHF standards, but construction and exterior may differ.
- Other exceptions must be requested from and approved by the CC in writing
- Official match report must be filled-in in compliance with NRC recommendations and forwarded to CC as a hard copy or email attachment no later than 10 business days after the game was played.
- To be considered compliant by the NRC, the official match report must be filled in by the technical delegate ahead of time and double-checked by the nominated referees before the match. Team officials must inform the delegate and the referees whether there's a change of players or numbers before the start of the match. Team officials must then sign the report, and the referees turn the official match report over to the scorekeeper. Upon completion of the match, the technical delegate must double-check the information reported, and sign the report.

## **Article I. Participant Registration and Eligibility**

### **Section 1.01 Player Eligibility**

Pursuant to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, USATH will provide an equal opportunity to amateur athletes, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators, and officials to participate in amateur athletic competition, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual preference or orientation, gender identity, age, or national origin.



## **Section 1.02      Participant Registration**

All active members of a USATH-recognized Club, including colleges and schools, coaches, athletes, and officials are required to register online on the official USATH membership platform.

The dues structure, levels, and deadlines to pay are set annually by the USATH Board of Directors and posted on USATH website.

Only USATH registered teams, clubs, LOCs will be eligible to sanction their tournaments.

## **Section 1.03      Club/Team Regulations and Standards**

To be recognized by the USATH, an existing club/team must fulfill the following annual requirements:

- A. Maintain an up-to-date profile with the TD or CEO, including contact information for club and club's designated official as liaison with USATH.
- B. Keep up with Club/Team annual fees per schedule, per Section 1.02.

All new clubs must register and comply with all required paperwork and fees before participating in any USATH sanctioned event. The failure to maintain Member Registration, and/or complete requisite submission of information and fees at least thirty (30) days prior to a USATH sanctioned event

Furthermore, clubs are encouraged to:

- A. Be incorporated in their state of operation (not-for-profit 501(c)(3) status is recommended).
- B. Have at least one USATH certified pair of referees (non-players are recommended as officials) per team.



## **Article II. Code of Conduct**

### **Section 2.01 Application**

All participants (including players, coaches, referees, event organizers and volunteers) in USATH sanctioned events are considered ambassadors of the game and, as such, must adhere to these rules. In line with USATH policy, individual participant signatures are not mandatory; registration as a member of USATH implies agreement to comply with the Code of Conduct.

### **Section 2.02 Authority to Implement the Rules and Code at Events**

- A. During any match occurring in a USATH sanctioned event, the technical delegate, in support of the referees is the ultimate disciplinary authority. Their authority extends from the moment players and coaches enter the venue, to the moment they leave the venue, including warm-ups, actual game play, time-outs, and halftime.
- B. Prior to the first game of any sanctioned event, the LOC will form an Event Disciplinary Committee (EDC) comprised of, at a minimum:
  - a. Event Manager (EM),
  - b. Head Referee,
  - c. At least one (1) Athlete Representative. Every effort will be made to have a male and female athlete representative.
- C. The EDC will meet in the following situations:
  - a. The use, by the game officials, of the blue card.
  - b. An immediate disqualification from a game issued by referees for any player and/or team official related to either unsportsmanlike conduct and/or dangerous play.
  - c. Any and all actions by any individual prior to, or after a game, that are deemed detrimental to the tournament organizer and/or to the USATH including, but not limited to unsportsmanlike conduct towards other participants (verbal and/or physical), referees, tournament staff and volunteers, facility employees, and/or spectators, as well as destruction of property.
  - d. Any situation not described above requiring the intervention of a disciplinary authority. This authority extends over all event venues, participants, and spectators.

### **Section 2.03 Unacceptable Behavior during USATH Sanctioned Event**

This Rule Book defines as unacceptable behavior:

- A. The use of offensive language - generally as a disparaging remark to an opposing player, toward a referee or spectators, or even as an expression of frustration or self-admonishment. This includes any act that is reasonably likely to threaten, disparage, vilify, offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or group based on race, gender, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or gender identification.
- B. Questioning and/or disputing of the referee's decision.
- C. Failure to obey referee instructions and/or to leave the court promptly upon being penalized by a referee.
- D. Abuse of equipment (e.g. kicking/spiking the ball, removing his / her shirt, etc....)
- E. Improper conduct and/or failure to exit the competition hall without delay after a player has been disqualified.

### **Section 2.04 Referees' Obligations in Event of Direct Disqualification**

- A. An incident resulting in disqualification of any player and/or team official during a game, except for 3<sup>rd</sup> 2-minute suspension, will be described in writing by the respective referees on the back side of the match report upon conclusion of that match indicating any additional disciplinary actions needed.



- B. When required, the EDC will meet, review, and render its decision as soon as possible, and no later than the involved person's next match. Only members of the EDC are allowed to participate in this process. However, the EDC, at its sole discretion, may confer with other individuals related to the subject matter under review. Notice of actions, if any, will be delivered verbally to the player(s) and/or team official(s) immediately after the meeting to be followed by a written report for the record. If that person is not available, notice will be delivered as soon as possible. There are no appeals of actions taken by the local EDC.
- C. In the case where a direct disqualification is issued during the last game of an event, the EDC will note as such on the match report and USATH Disqualification Report. Upon receiving the Disqualification Report, the TD or CEO will review the case and render any additional sanctions. All involved parties will be notified of any additional sanctions via email within 15 business days.

## Section 2.05 Minimum Recommended Penalties for Violations

The following guidelines/recommendations are established to help standardize additional punishments that may be issued during USATH sanctioned events. The EDC should adhere to the recommended penalties but are not bound them.

- A. The following are recommended punishments for in-game violations:

Violation	Occurrence	Minimum Penalty	Maximum Penalty
<b>Rough/dangerous play</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> red card	No additional punishment required	N/A
	2 <sup>nd</sup> red card	1 game suspension	Rest of the tournament
<b>Unsportsmanlike conduct</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> red card	1 game suspension	3 game suspension
	2 <sup>nd</sup> red card	2 game suspension	Rest of the tournament
<b>Red card for verbal abuse or physical assault that is personal in nature<sup>1</sup></b>		Automatic disqualification from the tournament	Review by USATH Disciplinary Committee, subject to due process

- B. If disciplinary measures, regardless of source, result in a player's suspension for 1 or more matches during the season, such suspensions must be served during next USATH sanctioned match. If by the end of the season, not all suspensions have been served; those will roll over into the next season.

## Section 2.06 Recommended Actions for Inappropriate Out-of-Game Conduct

There are no specific guidelines for out-of-game violations. The respective EDC will have wide latitude in issuing punishments. However, the EDC should review existing guidelines for in-game violations, especially related to unsportsmanlike behavior, as use as a guideline when making its decisions.

## Section 2.07 Safe Sport Commitment

USATH totally embraces the principles and guidelines that serve to protect our membership and we work closely in collaboration with the U.S. Center for SafeSport and the U.S. Olympic Committee toward that end. In that spirit, all participants will be expected to comply with Safe Sport requirements, as enforced on the USATH membership platform, in the USATH MAAPP and Athlete Safety Policy, and in the USATH Quality Control System.

<sup>1</sup> Remarks regarding age, gender, ethnicity, religion, character, physical appearance, competency level or sexual orientation.





## **Article III. Rules of the Game**

### **Section 3.01 Application of the Rules**

The USATH, as member of the International Handball Federation (IHF), will apply all handball rules specified in the IHF Rules of the Game (valid at that time) in all USATH sanctioned events.

### **Section 3.02 Exemptions**

In order to lower the barrier to entry, LOC will be given flexibility on the enforcement of IHF Regulations on Protective Equipment and Accessories. Where appropriate, the LOC shall have authority to decline enforcement of certain rules provided that this only be applied to cosmetic aspects (e.g. color matching between base layers and jerseys) and not endanger athlete safety.

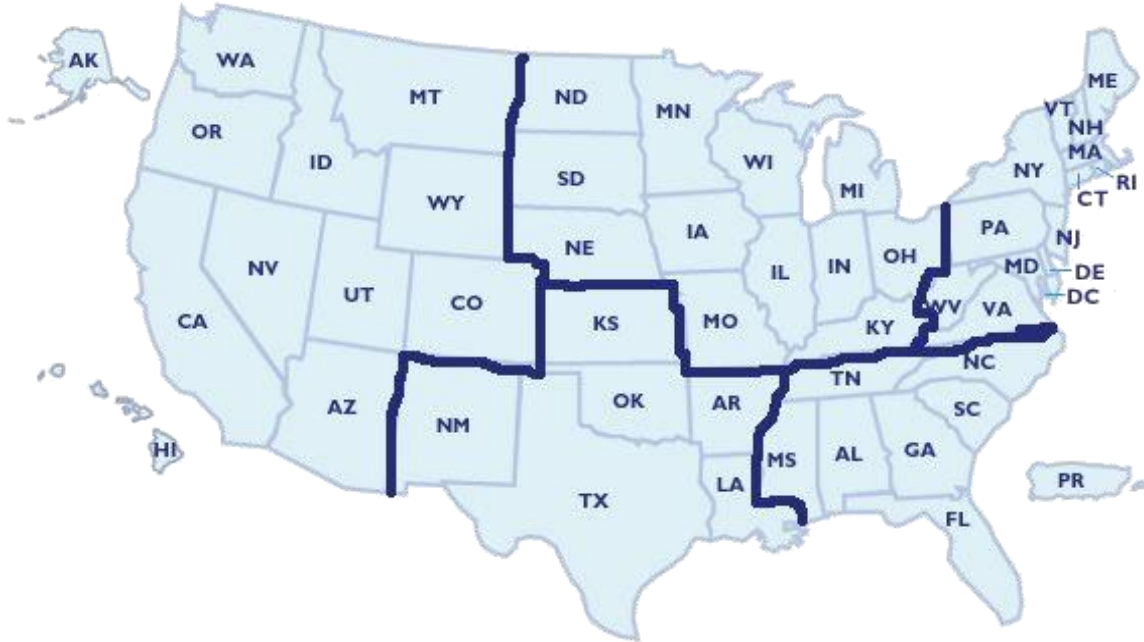
### **Section 3.03 Copies of the Rules**

In addition to this USATH Competition Rulebook, all USATH published policies and guides can be found at [www.usateamhandball.org](http://www.usateamhandball.org). The IHF Rules of the Game can be found digitally [here](https://www.ihf.info/regulations-documents/361?selected=Rules%20of%20the%20Game), at <https://www.ihf.info/regulations-documents/361?selected=Rules%20of%20the%20Game>.

## Article IV. USATH Regional Structure, Qualifiers, and Leagues

### Section 4.01 Regions

There are five (5) regions for USATH Handball competition and classification purposes. Regions and their respective regional representatives, comprising of the USATH CC, as seated from time to time, may be granted sole and independently responsibility, within the parameters set forth in this Rule Book and USATH published policies, for working out a system of regional competitions, including local games, regional tournaments and regional leagues. Requests to qualify for Open Club Championships from outside of a home region will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The regions are outlined below:



WEST	MIDWEST	SOUTHWEST	NORTHEAST	SOUTHEAST
Alaska	Illinois	Arkansas	Connecticut	Alabama
Arizona	Indiana	Kansas	Delaware	Florida
California	Iowa	Louisiana	Maine	Georgia
Colorado	Kentucky	New Mexico	Maryland	Mississippi
Hawaii	Michigan	Oklahoma	Massachusetts	North Carolina
Idaho	Minnesota	Texas	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Montana	Missouri		New Jersey	Tennessee
Nevada	Nebraska		New York	
Oregon	North Dakota		Pennsylvania	
Utah	Ohio		Rhode Island	
Washington	South Dakota		Vermont	
Wyoming	Wisconsin		Virginia	
			West Virginia	
			Washington, D.C.	



## **Section 4.02 USATH Regional Qualification Process**

Each region will strive to have a Regional Qualification Process, to determine its entrants into the USATH Open Club ELITE Championships. Only USATH sanctioned single contests, multi-game tournaments, and regional leagues are recognized as “qualifying” towards USATH Club, College, and High School National Championships. The USATH CC, or the CEO when no CC is fully seated, is ultimately responsible for the determination of the qualification format, which is described in Article VI.

The number of available seeds for each region will be determined based on the number of Active teams in the region. A team shall be considered Active if it participates in at least 60% of the maximum matches within a regional league table (e.g., if multiple region teams play 12 matches, then only, and all, teams completing 8 or more matches in region sanctioned competition shall be considered Active) If a Region instead adopts a points system or multi-event structure, in lieu of cumulative standings, than a team shall be considered Active if it participates in all scheduled matches in greater than 50% of region sanctioned events.

In case the winner of a sanctioned Regional League or Regional Qualification Tournament is also the reigning Club Champion, an additional bid shall be awarded to the next highest ranked team from that region. In the event that the qualified teams decline the bid, their spot(s) shall be granted to the highest-ranking regional finishers interested in accepting it, not lower than the third-ordered replacement (e.g., A 1<sup>st</sup> place bid declined shall only be offered to as low as the 4<sup>th</sup> place finisher in succession). If none of the remaining eligible teams accept the bid, such bid should be turned over and become a Wild Card bid.

The CC will strive to announce the assigned regional bids early in the season. With that in mind, regional committees are required to commit the number of active teams no later than October 31<sup>st</sup> of any given year. Following that commitment, the CC will announce the format and for the USATH Open Club Championships no later than November 15<sup>th</sup> of any given year.

Results are expected to be communicated to the CC on a regular basis if not made available online, and final standings are due by March 31<sup>st</sup> of any given year, in order to facilitate the draw of the Open Club divisions.

If a regional committee does not meet its committed schedule, the CC reserves the right to reassign the ELITE bids that had been assigned to the region.

## **Section 4.03 Regional Leagues and Local Competitions**

Each region will strive to have a sanctioned regional league(s) with a designated Commissioner and own website or maintain a dedicated page on USATH website about playing schedule, participating teams, league news and results. Regional leagues will abide by the regulations set forth by the USATH CC, and comply with the USATH Rulebook.



## Article V. USATH Sanctioned Events Involving Domestic Teams

This article is the reference to be followed by any LOC hosting a domestic tournament. It replaces the USATH Tournament Sanctioning Guide.

### Section 5.01 Authority

Per USOC charter as the National Governing Body for Team Handball and subsequent authority and duties, including granting sanctions for amateur athletic competition under paragraph 220525 of the Ted Stevens Act, USA Team Handball sanctions events involving domestic teams and clubs (Article II) and international club and National Teams competitions (Article III) to ensure:

- A. an equal opportunity for all hosts (teams, clubs, LOCs) to hold tournaments without unreasonably competing for the same teams to participate in these tournaments and,
- B. all players to participate in these events under the best possible playing, officiating, safety, and social conditions.

### Section 5.02 Eligibility and Exemptions

Only USATH registered and recognized teams/clubs and LOC may apply to and have an event sanctioned. All events, including single matches and multiple match tournaments, ought to be sanctioned by the USATH TD, CEO or designee.

**Note: Only USATH sanctioned single contests, multi-game tournaments, and regional leagues are recognized as “qualifying” towards USATH Open Club, College, and High School National Championships.**

### Section 5.03 Rights and Responsibilities of the Host Organization

In applying for sanction, the host (team/club and/or LOC) agrees to:

- A. Conduct the tournament in accordance with the USATH Rules of the Game as defined in Article I.
- B. Abide by the USATH Sanctioning Process as defined in Section 5.04.
- C. Defer to the NRC in matters of officiating and management of referees.

In return, the host obtains the right to:

- A. USATH General Liability and Secondary Accidental insurance coverage for the competition venue owners, host team/clubs players, visiting participants, spectators, and guests.
- B. Conduct the tournament on the dates at the location specified.
- C. Have the single contest and/or tournament and all games played recognized as “qualifying” for USATH Open Club Championship events.
- D. Have the tournament listed on the USATH web page (Events).
- E. Receive necessary forms for the conduct of the tournament.
- F. Receive support from the USATH staff to check participants’ membership status.
- G. Use the designation of USATH sanctioned event to leverage media attention, larger attendance, sponsorships and revenue opportunities, including use of the USATH logo and access to the USATH sponsors network.
- H. Have the results published on the USATH web page provided the information is submitted in a timely manner and subject to standard editorial policies.

### Section 5.04 Sanctioning Process

The entire sanctioning process, including approval process is currently being established on the USATH online platform. Please contact the CC chair, TD or CEO for more information.



**Note: for all league tournaments, the league commissioner shall be responsible for managing the sanctioning process for each event and reporting the league's results to the CC.**

## **Section 5.05      Participation in Sanctioned Events**

### **(a) Membership requirements**

- A. All players and coaches in a sanctioned tournament must be USATH members. Memberships are valid for one season and have to be renewed annually to maintain participation eligibility. All USATH memberships are to be purchased through the dedicated platform.
- B. USATH will provide sponsoring club an access to listing of current members to the EM prior to the start of the sanctioned event. However, the LOC is fully responsible for checking players' eligibility to compete.

### **(b) Officiating requirements**

- A. Each match must be officiated by two (2) USATH certified referees, except for games where the NRC is observing newer referees as part of their training/certification process.
- B. Each qualified match should also involve a USATH certified technical delegate to oversee timekeeping and scorekeeping.
- C. The sponsoring LOC is responsible for all arrangements and costs related to referee needs. Please consult the National Referee Committee (NRC) for the currently enforceable referee court fees to be paid. Upon request, USATH and the NRC may assist the LOC in identifying available certified officials.

### **(c) Players**

- A. A player may sign up at any time during the playing season; however, they will not be cleared to play at sanctioned events until their registration has been certified by the USATH.
- B. Once a player has taken part in a sanctioned event with a team, they may not participate in sanctioned events with other teams, except in the following situations:
  - a. One-time waiver (up to two per team, per tournament) to help a team meet minimum roster requirements. This only applies to teams that have fewer than ten (10) players on their roster. In that case, the sanctioned event will not be counted towards that player's eligibility for participation in the ELITE division. Note that one-time waivers **must be announced in writing** at the time that the roster is submitted for review by the CC. The CC will be responsible for maintaining a record of all those waivers, should the TD or CEO need to review them prior to the Open Club Championships. Players may not play for more than two (2) teams over the course of a season.
  - b. Permanent transfer, submitted in writing to the CC Chairperson and approved by the club of origin. This process, including approval from the TD or CEO, must be completed **prior** to playing any sanctioned game with a new team. The CC will be responsible for maintaining a record of all permanent transfers, should the TD or CEO need to review them prior to the Open Club Championships. Note that any sanctioned games played with a former team will not count towards eligibility with a new team. All permanent transfers must fall within one the following categories:
    - i. Off-season transfers – players may transfer without justification during the off-season period, from June 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> of every year. Those transfers must still meet the rules listed previously but do not require justification.
    - ii. In-season transfers – players may transfer one-time during the season, provided they present justification with their request. Acceptable forms of justification include – but are not limited to – relocation or strategic change on the player's current team. The CC will review the request and make a recommendation to the TD or CEO, who will have the ultimate decision on whether or not to allow the transfer.

## Section 5.06 Violation(s)

Any and all violations of Article IV shall be recorded by the TD or CEO and are subject to disciplinary sanctions by USATH. Pending disciplinary sanctions shall be communicated in writing, via emails, to the respective parties as soon as recognized but no later than within 60 days after the event.

Should an individual or club/team/LOC wish to appeal those sanctions, they will have 10 business days to do so to the CEO. The CEO will review the case and either support, alter, or overrule the sanction rendered, in consultation with the CC, within 15 business days. The CEO's decision is final and cases that are denied for appeal cannot be reopened.

## Section 5.07 Minimum Venue Requirements

The following are minimum venue standards that the LOC is expected to meet. However, the LOC can use the Sanctioning Application to request an exception be made. The USATH's TD or designee shall respond **within 10 days** with an approval or a denial.

### (a) Court

Only a regulation Team Handball court measuring 20 m x 40 m (or approximately 65'7" x 131'2") should be used for all sanctioned events. Each court should have at least a 2m, with 3m preferred perimeter "safety zone" surrounding it. Each venue shall have at least one Stadium Court that meets basic Court requirements and provides seating for at least 100 spectators via bleachers and/or seating bowl.

Note: Courts need not necessarily be adjacent and/or under one roof, but should be within easy walking distance (less than a ½ mile).

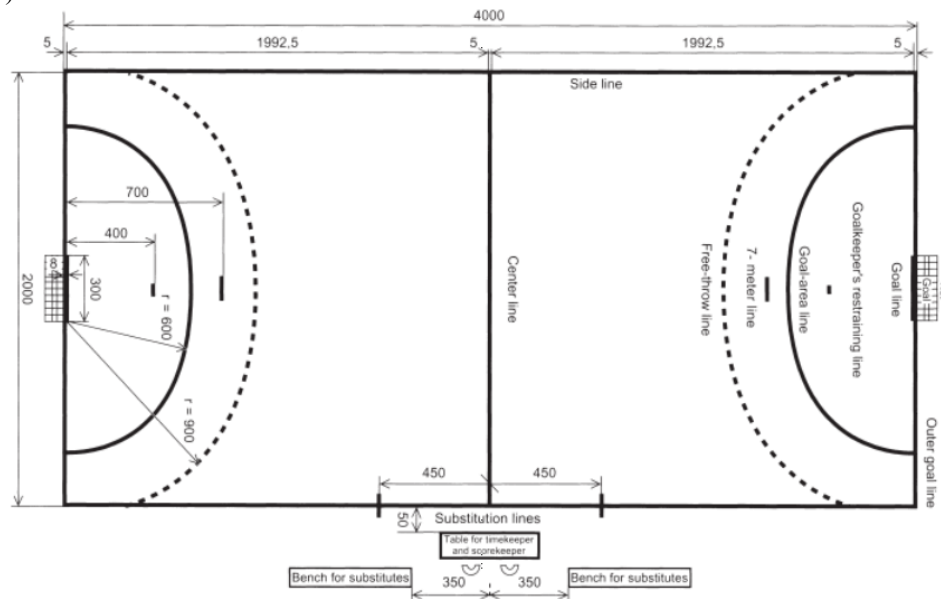


Figure 1 - Court layout

### (b) Court Lines

Each court must be visibly marked with 2-inch wide lines according to the IHF rules.

### (c) Goals

Each court must have 2 regulation goals with nets. Both goals must be securely attached to the floor with anchors and/or weights and/or sand bags.

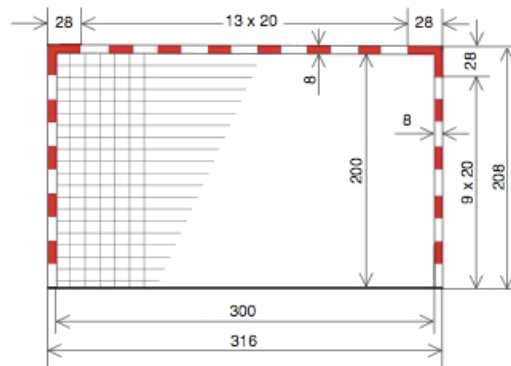


Figure 2 - Regulation Goal

### (d) USATH Table

If so stipulated by USATH, the main gymnasium shall have one dedicated USATH membership/merchandise table placed near the entrance. The LOC will not be required to manage that table.

### (e) Team Bench

Each court shall have sufficient bench seating for 16 athletes for each team and up to four (4) team officials (2 coaches, 1 athletic trainer, and 1 manager/statistician). The team bench must be placed in accordance with Figure 1.

### (f) Officials' Table

Each court shall have one (1) official's table (capacity: 3 people) equipped with scoreboards (manual or mechanical) that are visible to the spectators facing the scoring tables.

Each scoring table must have the equipment listed below:

- A. Two (2) stopwatches
- B. Two (2) regulation size balls
- C. Pre Printed Match Reports plus 10 blanks
- D. Two (2) Red Sharpies
- E. Four (4) black pens
- F. Cards
  - a. One (1) yellow
  - b. One (1) red
  - c. One (1) blue
- G. Two minute penalty sheets – print 10 per game
- H. Two (2) Penalty sheet stands
- I. One (1) Whistle
- J. Three (3) large green laminated and numbered time out cards
- K. One (1) air pump with extra inflator needles
- L. Five (5) blank injury reports
- M. Sandbags or weights to hold down goals
- N. One (1) pair of scissors and string for goal repair
- O. Form and display for tracking injury player stoppage – 2 possessions.

**(g) Locker Rooms**

Each venue shall provide separate men's and women's changing rooms (capacity: 20 players each). It is not required that each court have its own locker room. Shower facilities are preferred, but not required. If lockers are not available, this must be communicated to teams prior to the tournament.

**(h) Venue Hours**

Depending on the number of teams that are entered, competition shall begin as early as 8 a.m. on Friday morning or as applicable and conclude no later than 5 p.m. on Sunday afternoon.

**(i) USATH Handball Operations Center**

Venue shall have, if so stipulated by USATH, one room (500 sq. feet) dedicated to USA Team Handball for its operations and storage.

**(j) Hospitality Area**

At least one room and/or tented area shall be designated, if so stipulated by USATH, for USA Team Handball and/or LOC hospitality.

**(k) Warm-up Area(s)**

Clearly designated and ample in size area for teams' general warm-up routines should be identified prior to the competition and communicated to teams' reps during the Technical Meeting.

## **Section 5.08 Minimum Game Scheduling Requirements**

**(a) Match Intervals**

Regardless of the event's competition format, the games must be planned in such a way to allow each team to have the following minimum time intervals between each match:

- 90 minutes between 2 x 30 minutes games
- 80 minutes between 2 x 25 minutes games
- 70 minutes between 2 x 20 minutes games

**(b) Length of the Half-Time**

The length of half time is to be respectively:

- 10 minutes for 2 x 30 minutes games
- 7 minutes for 2 x 25 minutes games
- 5 minutes for 2 x 20 minutes games

**(c) Warm-up times**

Minimum warm-up time on court before first match of the day and/or daily session of the competition should be at least 30 minutes. Minimum warm-up time on court for all other matches should be at least 10 minutes.

**(d) Maximum number of matches per event**

The maximum number of matches for an event must be defined according to the requirements listed previously.





### **Section 5.09 Minimum Athletic Trainer/Medical Care**

It is required that at least one (1) licensed medical provider (ATC, MD, EMT, or DO) be present in the competition area **at all times during competition** provided the play areas are within one hundred (100) feet of each other.

If play areas are located on separate floors, then one (1) licensed medical provider is required on each floor.

It is also required that a first aid kit and supply of ice be readily available for emergency first response treatment. All medical personnel and event staff should be easily recognizable.

The LOC is required to have an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) on site at all times. The location of the AED must be identified to all staff and Athletic Trainer at the Technical Meeting.

It is required that an EM have a published emergency contact list, emergency action plan and an emergency transportation plan available on hand at the venue.

The EM is responsible for introducing the Trainer and clearly stating where the trainer station will be located. For identification, an 8.5x11 sign should be posted above the Trainer Station.

### **Section 5.10 Hospitality and Communication**

The following is required from the LOC:

#### **(a) Signage**

Proper signage directing guests to the gymnasiums must be in place at all times

#### **(b) Schedules**

At least one (1) large printed schedule (24" x 24" minimum) must be posted at main doorways. The Schedule poster board should include the USATH logo and the words "This event is officially sanctioned by USA Team Handball".

#### **(c) Communications Board**

One large poster board must be present for any announcements (e.g. lunch location, tournament social event, special appearance, etc...)

#### **(d) Courtesy**

We encourage the LOC to inform players to act as good hosts. Everyone is encouraged to invite and educate new spectators about the sport.



## Article VI. USATH Open Championships

### Section 6.01 Open Club ELITE divisions

#### (a) Format

Provided there are enough interested and qualified teams, an ELITE division may be held for both MEN's and WOMEN's teams. The CC will announce, **no later than March 31<sup>st</sup>** of the on-going season, whether or not ELITE divisions will be held.

The ELITE divisions will be limited to twelve (12) teams until such a time as the number of ELITE-worthy teams exceeds that capacity. The CC reserves the right to adjust the format of play. The CC will preside over the draw of all teams into their respective pools of play.

#### (b) Minimum eligibility requirements

##### (i) Teams

- A. All teams wishing to participate in ELITE divisions must meet the following minimum participation standard:
  - a. Women: three (3) qualifying matches, including regional qualification tournaments.
  - b. Men: five (5) qualifying matches, including regional qualification tournaments.

Regional League Commissioners will be asked to provide participation information for all teams affiliated with their respective league.
- B. If a club wishes to enter two or more teams into the regional competition, it can do so under following conditions:
  - a. The club must declare its intentions in writing and provide a separate roster of at least 10 registered players for each team.
  - b. Each entered team must meet the minimum participation standard to be eligible for ELITE divisions.
  - c. If more than one team from the same club enters a qualification tournament, players may only play for one team during the course of that tournament.
  - d. If more than one team qualifies for the ELITE division, those teams may not swap players used during qualification. However, teams may add eligible players who have not played in the qualifier.
  - e. If only one team qualifies for the ELITE division, that team may call up any player from its club that:
    - i. complies with the player minimum participation rule for the qualified team
    - ii. has not qualified for the ELITE division with another team.

##### (ii) Players

- A. To be eligible for participation in the ELITE division, each player must meet the following requirements:
  - a. Female players: Prior to the start of Open Club Championships, and complying with all other parts of this rulebook, must be listed as a player, and therefore physically present, at four (4) qualifying games for the respective team qualified for the ELITE division.
  - b. Male players: Prior to the start of Open Club Championships, and complying with all other parts of this rulebook, must be listed as a player, and therefore physically present, at four (4) qualifying games for the respective team qualified for the ELITE division.
  - c. Qualifying games include all games played in Regional Qualification Tournaments and/or Sanctioned Regional Leagues, as well as any games at a sanctioned event.
- B. Each team will be allowed one (1) automatic exception from the player minimum participation rule.

#### (c) Qualification

ELITE divisions may feature from six (6) to twelve (12) teams, selected as follows.



**(i) Defending champion**

An automatic bid will be awarded to reigning ELITE Open Club Champions, under condition that they still meet the team eligibility requirements.

**(ii) Regional league seeding**

- A. Only regions with an official qualifying process are eligible to receive bids for ELITE divisions. The qualification process must be presented by the league commissioner and approved by the CC **by October 31<sup>st</sup>** of the on-going season.
- B. Based on the number of recognized regional leagues/qualifiers, the CC will announce the number of bids awarded to each region **by November 15<sup>th</sup>** of the on-going season, based on the following guidelines:
  - a. One (1) bid for regions with five (5) or fewer active teams.
  - b. Two (2) bids for regions with six (6) or more active teams.
- C. If a team has already been awarded an automatic bid, the regional bid passes to the next highest rank team in the region.
- D. If the total number of regional bids exceeds the number of available entries into the ELITE division, the CC reserves the right to reduce the number of bids for a given region and will provide an explanation to the concerned region's commissioner.

**(iii) Wild Card bid(s)**

If any bids remain, they will be assigned to the highest-ranking teams. Points are earned by participating in USATH Sanctioned Events based on the following table.

To be able to announce the schedule of events early in the season, clubs and LOCs that intend on hosting a sanctioned event must submit a request to the CC:

- A. No later than September 30<sup>th</sup> for events hosted between September and December of a given season.
- B. No later than December 31<sup>st</sup> for events hosted between January and April of a given season.

Each registered club may organize one, and only one Wild Card qualifying tournament per season. In the event that a club plans on hosting more than one event, they must notify the CC of which event will be counted as their Wild Card qualifier when submitting their intent to host. Every effort will be made to keep the USATH online platform up to date with all announced events.

**Table 1 - Wild Card Points System<sup>2</sup>**

RANK	NUMBER OF TEAMS IN TOURNAMENT						
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
1	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	1	1	2	3	4	5	6
5		1	1	2	3	4	5
6			1	1	2	3	4
7				1	1	2	3
8					1	1	2
9						1	1
10+							1

In an effort to raise the level of competition and incentivize teams to attend more competitive events, the following points multiplier will be applied:

<sup>2</sup> Events with fewer than four (4) teams are not eligible for Wild Card points.



Cup <sup>3</sup> teams present	Multiplier
≤ 10%	x1
≤ 25%	x1.25
≤ 50%	x1.5
≤ 75%	x1.75
> 75%	x2

A three (3) point bonus will be awarded to the defending OPEN division champions, in recognition of a successful season.

Teams participating in the USATH National Cup shall be awarded four (4) points, total, for their participation in all scheduled USATH National Cup events that season, and three (3) points per match victory, and one (1) point per match drawn in USATH National Cup play.

If two or more teams end up with the same number of points, ties will be broken using the following rules:

1. Head-to-head results during Wild Card qualifiers.
2. The best record (Win – Draw – Loss) against other teams that have qualified for the ELITE division. Records will be assessed using a points system (Win = 2 points – Draw = 1 point – Loss = 0 points).
3. A playoff game to be played on the first day of the Open Club Championships.

Additionally, Wild Card qualifying events must follow these rules:

- Given that the ELITE division is intended to determine the best US-based team, qualifying events should be comprised of at least two-thirds (2/3) US-based teams. If a sanctioned event does not meet that requirement, no Wild Card points will be attributed.
- Wild Card qualifiers may include up to two (2) teams from the same club. If a tournament includes more than two teams from the same club, Wild Card points will be allocated on a smaller sized tournament.
- All Wild Card qualifiers must be registered and hosted through the USATH online platform. This includes roster management, to allow for review by the CC and the USATH Membership Director no later than 14 days prior to the start of the event. The host will be responsible for ensuring that all registered teams and athletes meet the eligibility requirements, but they must receive a sign-off, in writing, from the CC and the USATH Membership Director prior to the start of the event in order to receive points for the event.

## Section 6.02 Open Club OPEN divisions

### (a) Format

The CC will determine the format of play based on the number of teams and preside over the draw of all teams into their respective pools of play.

### (b) Minimum eligibility requirements

Teams and players are required to comply with the requirements set forth in Section 5.05.

## Section 6.03 Open College Championships

### (a) Format

The CC will determine the format of play based on the number of teams and preside over the draw of all teams into their respective pools of play.

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<sup>3</sup> CUP teams are defined as those having qualified directly for and/or participating in the USATH National Cup in the current season.

**(b) Minimum eligibility requirements**

Teams and players are required to comply with the requirements set forth in Section 5.05. Players comprising properly registered college teams must be enrolled in an academic degree or certificate program. Faculty, staff or graduate students are not permitted to play but may serve as a coach or as a team official.

**(c) Eligible players**

All students currently enrolled in Undergraduate coursework at a university is eligible to play for that university's team. Additional players may be added to a team's roster to meet in order to meet minimum roster requirements if the request is made, in writing, to the CC Chairperson no later than 30 days prior to the Open College Championships and if one of the following situations applies to them. The CC will review the request and make a recommendation to the TD or CEO, who will have the ultimate decision on whether or not to allow the player to participate.

- Enrolled in Graduate coursework at the university in question.
- Enrolled in coursework at another university within the same state if that university does not have a team participating in the Open College Championships.

**Section 6.04      Open High School Championships****(a) Format**

The CC will determine the format of play based on the number of teams and preside over the draw of all teams into their respective pools of play.

**(b) Minimum eligibility requirements**

Teams and players are required to comply with the requirements set forth in Section 5.05.

**Section 6.05      Roster size requirements****(a) Minimum roster size**

All teams participating in the ELITE division must present a roster with a minimum of 12 players and one (1) team official.

All teams participating in any other Open Club Championship division must present a roster with a minimum of 10 players and one (1) team official.

**(b) Maximum roster size**

The maximum roster size for any USATH Open Club Championship is set at 16 players.

**(c) Reserve players**

- A. In order to encourage the development of the sport, teams will be allowed to bring up to two (2) additional players to USATH Open Club Championships.
- B. In the event a team elects to use its reserve players, a minimum number of 12 players for the ELITE division and 10 players for all other divisions must be clearly identified as "permanent players" and cannot be removed from the roster.
- C. In the event a "permanent player" is injured during the course of a championship and is ruled out for the remainder of the event, he may be replaced by a reserve player.
- D. The responsible team official (identified as official A) must ensure, prior to every game, that all active players are listed on the match report. Inactive players may not sit on the bench.



### Section 6.06 Table Area, Table Officials and USATH Delegates

The table area is reserved for the scorekeeper, time-keeper, and USATH Delegate or Designee, only. No other individuals can be sitting, standing, or walking-through that area while a game is under way. It is the responsibility of both team officials to ensure that this rule is followed.

The only exception may be an additional seat for an announcer if no other logistical solution is possible.

### Section 6.07 Sportsmanship and Performance Bonds

Each team competing in a USATH Open Club Championship (Club, College, or High School) is required to submit two (2) separate and refundable bonds (check made payable to USA Team Handball):

- A. A Sportsmanship Bond. The bond amount will be set in the tournament announcement and shall be returned to the team within 30 days of the conclusion of the Open Club Championship if no team member or team official is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct and/or verbal/physical assault.
- B. A Performance Bond. The bond amount will be set in the tournament announcement and shall be returned to the team within 30 days of the conclusion of the Open Club Championship if the team does not commit any violation related to minimum competition standards established by USATH for the respective Championship.

### Section 6.08 Rules for Foreign Teams Interested in Competing in the USATH Nationals

Any foreign club team, and not an All-Star team, is welcome and encouraged to participate in the USATH Open Club Championships under following guidelines:

- A. The ELITE divisions (Men and Women's) are reserved for US teams only, as they are meant to reflect the highest standard of handball in the United States. In the interest of growing the sport in North America, NACHC teams can be approved to participate in ELITE divisions, provided they follow the same rules as all US teams.
- B. Each team must verify its local roster by sending appropriate documentation proving local residence.
- C. Each team must pay standard participation fees set by the USATH and post required bonds
- D. Each team must bring, at its own expense (travel and hotel accommodations), at least one (1) certified referee to work during the event. The NRC reserves the right to accept/reject traveling guest referee(s) based on review of their refereeing certification credentials. If accepted to officiate during Nationals, the USATH will pay such referees for their court duties and per diem according to the established domestic scale.
- E. Each team must accept all medical, health and accident responsibility as well as satisfying their own visa requirements.
- F. Each team interested in College Nationals must proof its players' eligibility per USATH College Eligibility Criteria.

### Section 6.09 Seeding

Note that this section is applicable across all USATH Open Championships

#### (a) National ranking

In order to seed teams for the Open Championships, we will use a National Ranking system, based on the results of the previous Open Championships, at the start of every season.

- Each team will score points based on their overall placement in the Open Championships, in 2-point increments, with the highest number of points being allocated to the ELITE National Champion.
- All teams that did not participate in the Open Championships start the season with 0 points.



- Throughout the season, the National Ranking will be updated based on points that teams secure through sanctioned events, using Table 1. Note that only sanctioned events are counted in the ranking.
- Teams that participate in regional leagues will score points from that league worth double those listed in Table 1 (e.g. the winner of a 4-team league will score 8 points).

The final season ranking will be announced no later than 30 days prior to the Open Championships and used as the basis for seeding teams. Any ties will be broken by:

1. Head-to-head results in sanctioned events.
2. A random draw.

#### **(b) Seeding an even number of teams**

In the event that a division has an even number of teams, those teams will be split into as many pots as there will be teams per group in the group stage of the championship, in order of strength. For example, the pots would be the following for a 12-team and an 8-team championship group stage (12-team; 8-team)::

1. Team #1-4; Teams #1 & 2
2. Teams #5-8; Teams #3 & 4
3. Teams #9-12; Teams #5 & 6
4. Null; Teams #7 & 8

One team from each pot shall then be drawn at random into each group.

#### **(c) Seeding an odd number of teams**

In the event that a division has an odd number of teams, the absent position shall be treated as a blank entry and placed in the same pot as the lowest-ranked team(s). The blank entry shall be drawn into a group in the same manner as the qualified teams from that pot.

## **Article VII. USATH National Cup**

### **Section 7.01 Purpose and Overview**

- (a) The U.S. National Cup shall serve as the premier national club handball competition in the United States.
- (b) The Cup shall determine United States National Champion for any and all external recognition or qualification, including the official qualification pathway to:
  - i. The North American & Caribbean Handball Confederation (NACHC) Men's and Women's Club Continental Championship; and, therewith,
  - ii. The IHF Club World Championship.
- (c) The Cup establishes a top-division national league format to raise competitive standards, foster club development, and provide merit-based pathways to international play.

### **Section 7.02 Competition Format**

#### **(a) Season Structure**

- i. Participation is limited to 6–10 clubs.
- ii. Season competition occurs across three (3) or four (4) bidded Cup weekends.



- iii. Each event runs Friday–Sunday, with each team competing in 3–4 matches per weekend.
- iv. The complete season schedule shall be released prior to the first Cup weekend.

**(b) Match Format**

- i. Standard weekend schedule: one (1) Friday evening match, two (2) Saturday matches, one (1) Sunday match.
- ii. All matches shall be played under IHF Rules of the Game: two (2) halves of thirty (30) minutes, with a ten (10) minute halftime.
- iii. Matches must be contested on a regulation IHF court with all standard markings and equipment.

**(c) League Table and Splits**

- i. In the National Cup standings, Teams shall earn two (2) points per win, one (1) point per draw, and zero (0) points per loss.
- ii. A complete round robin shall precede a split-table final round. Once split, lower-table teams may not ascend into the upper-table rankings.
- iii. Examples:
  - 10 Teams: Nine (9) round robin matches, followed by split into top four and bottom six, concluding with 12 total matches.
  - 8 Teams: Seven (7) round robin matches, followed by five (5) matches per team with earned scheduling advantages based on seeding at the conclusion of round robin play, for 12 total matches.
  - 6 Teams: Ten (10) double round robin matches, followed by a split into top three and bottom three, concluding with 12 total matches.

**(d) Tiebreakers**

- i. Determined per IHF rules, except where modified above.

### **Section 7.03 Championship and Qualification**

- (a) The Cup Champion shall be the top-ranked team following the completion of all scheduled matches.
- (b) The highest-ranked eligible club(s) shall be designated as the U.S. representative(s) to the NACHC Club Continental Championship.
- (c) Teams earn Wild Card Points toward USATH Elite Open Championships qualification on the basis of Cup participation and results, as prescribed in Section 6.01(c)(iii).
- (e) Entry priority for the following season's Cup shall be determined by the final results of the US Open Championships in the preceding season. US Teams shall be ranked in successive order for priority for National Cup Invitation, beginning with the US Elite Open Champion, followed by all Elite Division participants by final ranking, then by the Open Division Champion and all Open Division participants by final ranking.

### **Section 7.04 Roster and Eligibility**

**(a) Roster Limits**

- i. Maximum twenty-five (25) unique players may be used across the Cup Season.
- ii. Sixteen (16) players may be registered per Cup Weekend.
- iii. All players intended for season participation must be declared by the roster deadline of the third Cup Weekend.

**(b) Transfer Restrictions**

- i. No player may compete in the Cup whose player card is held by another country, unless an IHF transfer has been completed and an IHF Certificate of Transfer conferred.
- ii. No transfers may occur between Cup clubs during the Cup Season.
- iii. USATH will process all inbound/outbound transfers via the IHF system; requesting clubs bear all





IHF/foreign federation fees.

iv. No inbound transfers may occur between the completion of the second Cup event and the completion of the final Cup event, except in cases of verified permanent relocation to the United States, subject to the review by the CC.

v. Any transfers between National Cup Clubs, for the purpose of player participation in the NACHC Club Championship, shall be reported to the NACHC as short-term transfers and count against the established limits imposed by the NACHC, at their discretion.

**(c) International Eligibility Requirement**

i. The lesser of one-sixth (1/6) rounded up, or three (3) players of each National Cup event roster must be U.S. passport holders eligible to represent the United States in international play. The conditions for eligibility to represent a country in international play can be found in the [IHF Player Eligibility Code](#).

**(d) Exemptions**

i. Age exemption: players over the age of thirty-five years old (35) may be registered under exemption with the Competition Committee. There shall be no restriction applied to their participation; this provision and exemption exist for the proper cataloguing and future support, as necessary, in light of discussion in 7.04(e) below.

ii. Players' participation with a club in non-Cup, sanctioned events shall not count against the 25-players-used maximum.

**(e) Reliance and Discretionary Adjustment**

Sections 7.04(c) and 7.04(d), in combination with the NACHC policy limiting clubs to no more than three (3) transfers for the NACHC Club Championships, ensure that National Cup roster composition reflects the standards of NACHC and IHF Club Championships, for which this competition serves as the direct qualification pathway. The rules contained in this section may be adjusted at the discretion of the CEO, outside any stated amendment timelines or processes of this Rule Book, to remain aligned with NACHC and/or IHF eligibility criteria for these qualification events. At present, the one-sixth (1/6) International Eligibility requirement, the over-thirty-five (35) age exemption, and the NACHC three (3) player transfer limit collectively allow U.S. clubs to participate fully in the National Cup Season while maintaining consistency with international eligibility standards applied in competitions to which this Cup qualifies. It does and shall reasonably remain in the best interest of USATH and all US clubs that qualification to events—particularly those events at which the qualified serve as an representative of our domestic competition and clubs writ large—occurs under the most proximal, if not identical, conditions as those which are enforced at those events.

## **Section 7.05 Registration and Fees**

**(a) Eligibility to Enter**

- i. Clubs must be members in good standing with USATH.
- ii. Clubs must commit to all scheduled Cup weekends.
- iii. Teams with outstanding debts to USATH or hosts are ineligible.

**(b) Registration Deadlines**

- July 15: Registration opens.
- August 28: Registration closes.
- August 31: Final team list announced.

**(c) Fees**

- i. Total entry fee shall be set in the Cup Invitation
- ii. USATH shall also collect a \$750 performance bond per weekend.
- iii. Hosts may collect sportsmanship bonds under their event policies.

**(d) Penalties and Sanctions**

- i. Teams withdrawing mid-season shall forfeit all Wild Card Points and remain liable for all outstanding performance bonds.



ii. Forfeits, roster violations, and unsportsmanlike conduct shall be subject to fines and sanctions under USATH regulations.

**(e) Refunds**

- 70% refund prior to first Cup Weekend.
- 50% refund prior to second Cup Weekend.
- No refund after second Cup Weekend, except for verified force majeure.

## Section 7.06      Hosting and Bid Procedures

**(a) Requirements**

- i. Hosts must provide at least two IHF-regulation indoor courts with resin permitted.
- ii. Certified referees, table officials, and medical staff must be appointed.
- iii. Matches must be video-recorded and livestreamed where technically feasible.
- iv. Branding and space must be allocated for USATH and official sponsors.

**(b) Bid Process**

- i. Bids must be submitted by July 15 for first consideration.
- ii. Submissions must include organizational details, venue specifications, dates, budget, and marketing/community plans.
- iii. Evaluation criteria include organizational capacity (40%), geographic diversity (30%), and accessibility/travel ease (30%).

**(c) Host Benefits**

- i. National promotion by USATH.
- ii. Recognition as an official U.S. National Cup host.
- iii. Priority in future hosting bids.
- iv. Revenue-sharing opportunities as determined per event.

**(d) Host Obligations**

- i. Hosts bear responsibility for local facility rental, staffing, and operations.
- ii. USATH shall cover referee travel and per diem, match scheduling, and insurance.

## Section 7.07      Gender Divisions

- (a) A U.S. National Cup shall be held for Men's and/or Women's divisions in any year following the prior season in which an Elite Division was contested for that gender at the USATH Open Championships.
- (b) USATH may, at its discretion, also conduct a U.S. National Cup for a gender in years when no Elite Division was contested at the Open Championships, provided sufficient demand and organizational capacity exist.
- (c) The determination of whether both Men's and Women's divisions are to be contested in a given year shall be made by the Competition Committee and approved by the USATH CEO, based on the competitive needs of the sport and the best interests of participant clubs.

# Article VIII.   USATH Beach Handball National Cup

## Section 8.01      Article Definitions

- (a) **USATH Beach Handball National Cup (BNC):** Refers to the three-event USA Team Handball (USATH) Beach Handball championship series held annually.
- (b) **USATH:** USA Team Handball.
- (c) **Good Standing:** Compliance with all USATH membership, Athlete Safety, conduct, and financial policies.



- (d) **Sportsmanship Bond:** A check-based deposit submitted by participating teams, refundable upon adherence to expected in-event conduct.
- (e) **Performance Bond:** An optional check-based deposit submitted to the host to guarantee team commitment, attendance, and on-site conduct.

## Section 8.02 Structure of the BNC

- (a) The USATH Beach Handball National Cup shall consist of three officially sanctioned tournaments held annually.
- (b) Participation in all three tournaments is required to be eligible for the BNC title and any associated consistency bonuses.
- (c) Current Placement Point Standings shall dictate seeding for group formats at all USATH sanctioned events during the present season, including Final Placement determining seeding for the first BNC event of the following season.

## Section 8.03 Point System

### (a) Placement Points Per Tournament

(Points awarded per team placement by tournament size; preserve the full points table from the prior manual.)

### (b) Roster Composition Bonus

- Teams with at least 70% U.S. passport holders receive a 20% bonus on points earned.

### (c) BNC Consistency Bonus

- Teams participating in all three events receive an additional 5 points.

### (d) Tie-Breaking Procedures

- i. Number of 1st-place finishes.
- ii. Head-to-head record (points, period difference, goal point difference, total goal points).
- iii. Complete Tour Record (period difference, plus periods, goal point difference, plus goal points).
- iv. If still unresolved, ranking shall be determined by draw.

## Section 8.04 Team Registration Requirements

### (a) Tournament and Roster Entry

- Teams must register via Sport80 by the host-stated deadline.
- Rosters must include accurate player details and nationality; final rosters are due one week prior to competition unless otherwise approved.
- Individuals may not compete with multiple teams at BNC events in the same season.

### (b) Forfeits and Conduct Violations

- Forfeiting matches may result in loss of bond amounts and/or removal from standings.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct or eligibility violations will be reviewed by the USATH Disciplinary Panel.
- On-site decisions will be rendered by the Event Disciplinary Committee, subject only to limited review by the National Referee Committee.

## Section 8.05 Host Eligibility and Requirements

### (a) Minimum Registration Capacity

- Hosts must accommodate a minimum of 10 teams across divisions and provide at least one full-sized beach handball court.

**(b) Completeness of Bids**

- Bids must be submitted to USATH by the announced deadline, with all requirements met.

**(c) Sanctioning & Award**

- Bids will be evaluated on facility quality, regional balance, calendar spacing, and promotional reach.
- Accepted bids must be published in Sport80 with full event details.

## **Section 8.06      Tournament Standards**

**(a) Court & Facilities**

- At least one IHF-compliant full-sized beach handball court with catch nets and visible game clock.
- Generator and equipment provided as necessary.
- Recovery and shaded spaces required.

**(b) Personnel**

- Matches must be officiated by two certified referees, plus certified timekeeper and secretary.
- Each event must have a designated Site Lead as primary liaison to USATH.

**(c) Media & Technology**

- Livestreaming required via USATH-directed channel (parallel hosting allowed).
- Photographer required.
- Same-day results reporting in prescribed format.
- Active social media coverage coordinated with USATH.

**(d) Atmosphere & Experience**

- Minimum two match days per event.
- Music/audio required throughout competition.

**(e) Sponsorship & Marketing**

- Hosts must allocate advertising space for USATH and official sponsors.
- Branding must comply with USATH visual identity standards.

**(f) Compliance**

- All players, coaches, and referees must be registered with USATH.
- Both men's and women's divisions are required unless formally waived.

**(g) Bonds**

- Hosts must require submission of a standardized Sportsmanship Bond.
- Hosts may additionally require a Performance Bond.

**(h) Costs**

- Hosts may set entry fees and are responsible for venue, staffing, and officials.
- USATH will provide insurance, administrative, and promotional support.

## **Section 8.07      Sample Bid Application Information**

- Event Name, Dates, Location, Courts, Primary Contact, Livestream Plan, Officials, Medical/Security Plans, Sponsor/Marketing Plans, Bond Commitment, etc.



## Article IX. Complaint(s)

### Section 9.01 Complaint Procedure for in-game offenses

If an individual wishes to file a complaint regarding the actions of any member (coach, player, referee, team official, etc...) during a USATH sanctioned game, such a complaint must be filed **within one (1) hour** of the conclusion of the game to the EDC. There is a refundable \$50 filing fee required, that is returned if the complaint is found to be valid/true.

The EDC will follow the process described in Article II to make any decision.

### Section 9.02 Complaint Procedure for out-of-game offenses

If an individual wishes to file a complaint regarding the actions of any member (coach, player, referee, team official, etc...) outside of a game, such a complaint must be filed in writing with the TD or CEO **within 7 days** of said action. As soon as the formal complaint is received, the person or club will receive notice of a pending disciplinary action.

- A. The USATH TD or designee will review the complaint and make a recommendation of action to the USATH CEO **within 15 business days**.
- B. The USATH CEO will review the TD's findings and support, alter or overrule the recommendation **within 7 business days**. Notices of the decision will be delivered to all parties involved and go into effect immediately.
- C. The individual or club will have **7 business days** to appeal the decision to the CEO, who will send the appeal to the USATH Judiciary Committee. The Judiciary Committee will review the case and either support, alter or overrule the recommendation and deliver its decision to the CEO **within 15 business days**.
- D. All USATH Judiciary Committee decisions are final, and cases that are denied for appeal cannot be reopened.
- E. USATH Bylaws contains further complaint/grievance processes that can be ultimately referred to the American Arbitration Association (AAA) but it is recommended to try and exhaust means internally to reach a remedy/resolution before elevating the matter to AAA.

## Article X. Violations, Strikes and Sanctions

### Section 10.01 Strikes

All violations of this Rule Book could result in the assignment of a "strike" to the participant and/or the club involved. Violations that cannot be attributed directly to any person but to a club will result in the assignment of a strike to said club.

### Section 10.02 Forfeit of the Game

All scheduled games must be played. Forfeiting a game in a USATH sanctioned event is considered a serious violation. For every match forfeited, the team/club will be assessed a strike.

### Section 10.03 Disciplinary Sanction(s)

The USATH TD or CEO will keep track of all violations occurred and strikes/sanctions issued. Once a person or a club has accumulated three strikes, or has committed a violation that requires immediate disciplinary action, said person or club is subject to disciplinary sanctions by USATH.



### **Section 10.04      Actions that Warrant Immediate Sanctions**

Egregious single actions by individuals or clubs may warrant immediate sanctions, even if that person or club has not acquired three strikes.

### **Section 10.05      Additional Sanctions**

For any violation of this Rule Book, the person or club involved is subject to disciplinary sanctions by USATH that include but are not limited to, fines, suspensions, revocation of USATH Membership and lifetime bans from USATH sanctioned events.

### **Section 10.06      Appeals**

Should an individual or club desire to appeal any additional sanctions given:

- A. The individual or club will have **7 business days** to appeal to the CEO who will send the appeal to the USATH Judiciary Committee. The committee will review the case and either support, alter or overrule the recommendation. The USATH Judiciary Committee will deliver its decision to the CEO **within 15 business days**.
- B. All USATH Judiciary Committee decisions are final.
- C. Disputes can be elevated to the complaint/grievance process found in the USATH Bylaws and could lead to the dispute being adjudicated by the American Arbitration Association (AAA). Every attempt should be made to resolve the matter internally before taking a complaint/grievance to the AAA.

## **Article XI.      Amendments, Conflicts and Interpretations**

### **Section 11.01      Amendments**

Changes to this Rule Book may only be made by the USATH TD or CEO in consultation with the CC, with the approval of the USATH President.

Any Changes or Addendums will be published in a timely manner at [www.usateamhandball.org](http://www.usateamhandball.org). All registered clubs will be notified of such changes via email.

### **Section 11.02      Conflicts or Interpretation Issues**

Any conflicts or interpretation issues resulting from this Rule Book will be resolved and published by the USATH TD or CEO. If needed, the TD or CEO will publish such interpretations as addendums to this Rule Book.

### **Section 11.03      Effective Date and Transition, Proposed Rule Changes**

This revision of the Rule Book is scheduled to go into effect on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 and will be published at [www.usateamhandball.org](http://www.usateamhandball.org).

The USATH TD or CEO will submit a timetable for gradual and full compliance by all persons and groups involved with USA Team Handball, if required.

Proposed changes to this Rule Book should be submitted to the TD, CEO or the USATH CC for review.