U.S. Drone Soccer **Comprehensive Ruleset**

2026-2027 Season

FAI F9A - 20cm Drone Soccer Gameplay

It is recommended that all coaches, pilots, and administrators read this comprehensive ruleset to enhance play and competition for all.

2026 Ruleset f90426

This Comprehensive Ruleset Sept 4, 2026 Edition includes the following amendments made to prior editions.

Paragraph	Date of Change	Brief Description of Change	Change by
Requirements: Fielding Diverse Coed Teams	9/4/26	1st two sets are co-ed. Replaced "new pilots" with "new crew members".	Rules & Leadership Committee
1.3 Terminology and Abbreviations	9/4/26	Added new terms: Competition Zone, Event, and Event Director(s). Added roster requirements to several terms. Updated Team definition to "crew members".	Rules & Leadership Committee
2.0 Events and Competitions *(New)*	9/4/26	Added an entire section covering Sanctioned Events, Points System and bonus point calculations, and Participation in International Competitions.	Rules & Leadership Committee
3.1 Drone Soccer Ball Aircraft Specifications	9/4/26	Added specifications requiring 4 electric motors.	Rules & Leadership Committee
3.2 Required Batteries	9/4/26	Updated text to 2026-27	Rules & Leadership Committee
4.1 Team Composition	9/4/26	1st two sets are co-ed. Changed "players" to "crew members".	Rules & Leadership Committee
4.5 Tournament Preparation	9/4/26	Inspection team marks registered models.	Rules & Leadership Committee
4.6 Spot Inspections *(New)*	9/4/26	Referees may conduct random spot inspections with repercussions.	Rules & Leadership Committee

Paragraph	Date of Change	Brief Description of Change	Change by
4.7 Referee Configuration	9/4/26	Score Keepers and Goal Judges are Referees and may be combined. All referees must complete referee certification.	Rules & Leadership Committee
4.8 Match Preparation	9/4/26	Only crew members and official staff are allowed to enter Competition Zones.	Rules & Leadership Committee
5.2 Set Tiebreaker/Sudden Death	9/4/26	Tie scores at the end of a set include penalties. Penalties committed during Sudden Death resolve after the set. The Head Referee may utilize video recording during Sudden Death.	Rules & Leadership Committee
5.4 Team Captain	9/4/26	Team Captains must wear something which identifies them as the Captain.	Rules & Leadership Committee
5.5 Scoring	9/4/26	Added a cross-reference link to "(see 5.7 Penalties)".	Rules & Leadership Committee
5.6 Offsides	9/4/26	Grounded aircraft must retreat behind the centerline if it becomes active again.	Rules & Leadership Committee
5.7 Penalties	9/4/26	Non-striker drones flying forward through a goal will not be awarded points or penalized. Failure to comply with the Referee or Event Director. Changed "Match or Tournament" to "Match or Event".	Rules & Leadership Committee
5.12 Escaped Aircraft *(New)*	9/4/26	Match will be paused if an aircraft escapes the arena.	Rules & Leadership Committee

Paragraph	Date of Change	Brief Description of Change	Change by
5.13 Repair Intervals *(New)*	9/4/26	Active players and aircraft must remain at the arena until the repair interval starts. Repair intervals last at least 5 minutes. Players failing to arrive before interval ends are disqualified from the upcoming set.	Rules & Leadership Committee
5.14 Rules Exceptions *(New Section)*	9/4/26	Procedure for handling undefined rules.	Rules & Leadership Committee
5.15 Practice Flights *(New Section)*	9/4/26	Event Directors define uniform practice conditions.	Rules & Leadership Committee

U.S. Drone Soccer Requirements

Fielding Diverse Coed Teams - All teams must intentionally create and maintain a welcoming and supportive environment for new crew members, and ensure representation and participation of all genders and abilities. Encourage and welcome communities historically excluded from aviation into the program. Teams without a minimum of one male and one female pilot in the first two sets of any Match are not eligible to advance in tournaments.

Respect and Anti-Harassment - All players have the right to equal participation and respect without fear, bullying, intimidation, or belittlement. We maintain a zero-tolerance policy for bullying, racism, bigotry, and sexual harassment. It is a violation of this policy to retaliate against any person who asserts their rights regarding harassment.

Safe Aircraft Operation - Each pilot and crew member must take responsibility for the condition and operation of their drones and equipment. All flights should be conducted in a netted arena or designated practice area. Reckless flight or intentional damage to other teams or players will not be tolerated. Participants must practice good situational awareness to ensure the safety of themselves and others.

Anonymous Reporting - Mirroring practices in professional aviation, all concerns about unsafe situations or inappropriate conduct can be anonymously provided to league administrators. Please include your contact information and a description of your concerns to reporting@usdronesoccer.org. Personally identifying information will be kept confidential unless prior consent is obtained, or the situation involves a suspected crime or threat to public safety that must be reported to law enforcement.

Integrity & Fair Play - Teams cannot interfere with the equipment or operations of other teams. Examples of prohibited activities include radio frequency interference or jamming, hacking, distraction, disruptive chatter, eavesdropping, or tampering with equipment.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Manual and Checklist Use

Manuals and checklists are written in a specific order, and doing those actions in order is important. Consistent checklist use is a sign of a disciplined and competent aircrew. Steps that must be done in order will be numbered. These steps apply to all crew unless specified (P for Pilot, and R for Referee). A separation indicates the Cue on the left … and the Action to be taken on the right. Items with a Verbal Response are in quotations. Every time you complete an Action, you should Verify the results of that action, items to check and verify are listed with bullets.
For Example:

1. ON COMMAND (R).....“ARM YOUR DRONES”
2. THROTTLE (P).....IDLE
3. RADIO ARMING SWITCH (P)…….……..…ON ●
   Verify propellers are spinning at idle power

1.2 Warnings, Cautions, and Notes

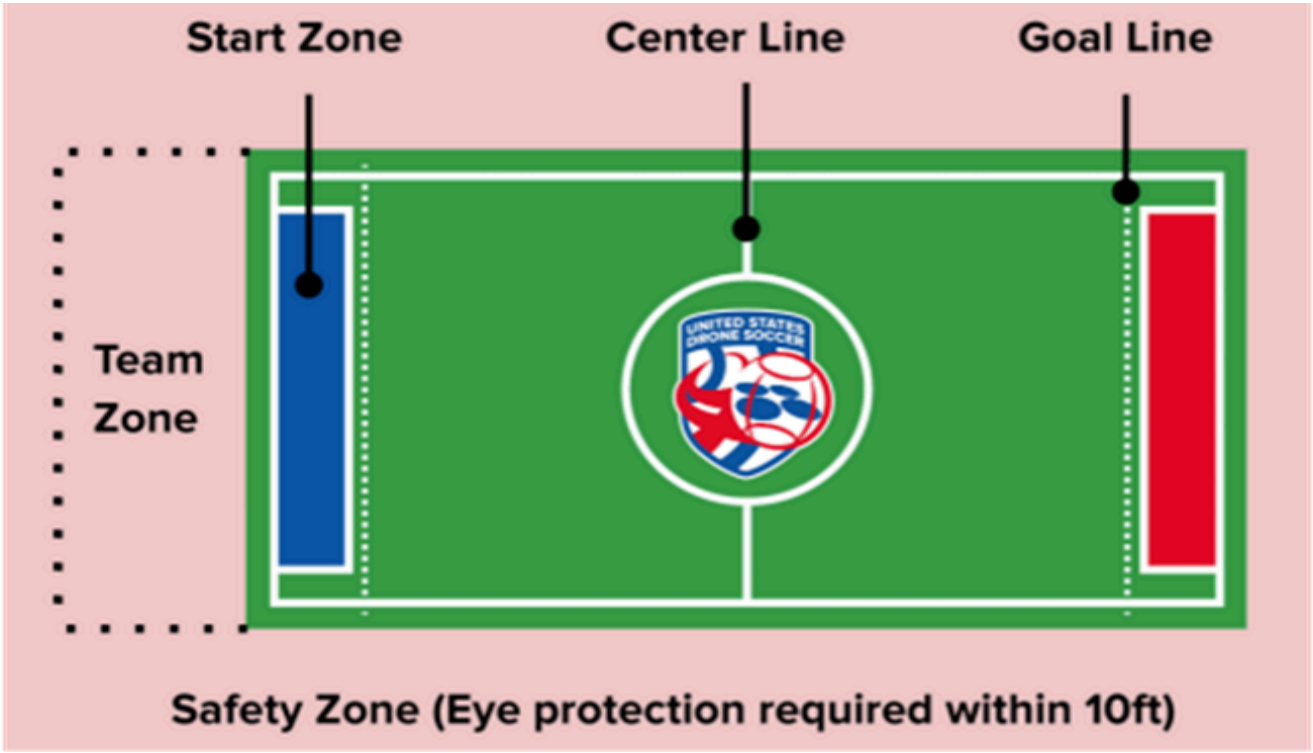
These statements are used throughout this manual to emphasize important and critical information.

⚠ ***WARNING:***   ***A procedure that may result in personal injury or property damage if not carefully followed.***
⚠ ***CAUTION:***   ***A procedure that may result in damage to equipment if not carefully followed.***
Note: Information that is essential, and often related to safety.

1.3 Terminology and Abbreviations

Active Players	The recognized and rostered list of pilots for a given Match.
Arena	Playing area within a netted enclosure of 10x10x20ft.
Arm	Switch on the transmitter that activates the drone motors.
Cells	The number of smaller batteries wired in a series, S for series e.g. 4 S = 4 cell battery.
Center Line	The center of the Arena that separates offensive and defensive zones.
Coach/Manager	Adult leaders who guide a Team.
Competition Zone	Areas defined and labeled for entry by Crew Members only. This includes the arenas and pilot areas, team tables used for repairs, etc.
Crew Members	The recognized and rostered list of Coaches & Crew for a given competition (no greater than 12 including coaches).
Crew/Roster	The entire Team (includes members not actively flying).
Disarm	Deactivate motors through switch on transmitter to stop aircraft motors from turning.
Drone	Shorthand for Drone Soccer Ball or UAS.
Event	A Tournament, Scrimmage or other type of official U.S. Drone Soccer function.
Event Director(s)	The Event Director(s) has a complete oversight of the event. He/she has the responsibility of the safety concerns and will support the main referee to ensure compliance of the event with rules.
FAI	Federation Aeronautique International (World Air Sports Federation) governing body on aviation.

Match	A Match consists of three Sets and two repair intervals.
Organization	A school or program registered with U.S. Drone Soccer and listed in LeagueOS at Fly.DroneSoccer.US
Player/Pilot	Rostered Crew Member operating aircraft as an active player.
Radio	Short for radio control transmitter.
Set	A gameplay interval of three minutes elapsed time.
Start Zone	The beginning of Set launch area in front of pilots.
Team	List of students under an Organization (no more than 10).
Team Captain	The only active Pilot & spokesperson in a Set who communicates with officials.
Team Zone	Rectangular area for Pilots at each end of the Arena.



2.0 EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS

2.1 Sanctioned Events

U.S. Drone Soccer's season is broken up into four types of events: Non-qualifier events, District Qualifiers, District Championships, and the National Championships. All sanctioned events must have results entered into LeagueOS or other U.S. Drone Soccer authorized tracking systems.

2.2 Event Formats

The Event Director(s) defines the format of the event. The format must be announced as early as possible and no later than one month before the event. There are three main formats that may be considered:

- Single Rounds
- Group stage followed by knockout and final stages in single/double elimination.
- Single/Double Elimination

2.21 Single Rounds

Single Rounds are used in Events where teams will not be awarded ranking points. Examples include open scrimmages, league play, and exhibitions.

2.22 Group Stage / Knockout

The event begins with a group stage followed by a knockout stage (single/double elimination), and then by the final stage with the play-off for the third place and the final.

In the group stage, every team plays a match against every other team in the group. The groups will be determined with a blind draw.
Note: It is recommended to consider 3 to 5 teams for each group taking care of a similar number of teams for all groups wherever possible.

2.23 Single/Double Elimination

The event is conducted as a knockout stage in either a single elimination or double elimination format.

2.3 Non-qualifier Events

Non-qualifier Events are scrimmages, friendlies, tournaments or other game events carried out during the season. Each team participating in these events will be awarded one point per event. These points may be used to seed teams for District Qualifiers, but will not be used for District or National Championships.

2.4 District Qualifiers

Each U.S. Drone Soccer District may hold a number of qualifiers in their district. U.S. Drone Soccer will appoint an Event Director(s) for each District Qualifier. Participation in District Qualifiers will earn points towards national rankings and will be used to seed teams at District Championships.

2.5 District Championships

U.S. Drone Soccer will appoint an Event Director(s) for each District Championship. Participation in District Championships will earn points towards national rankings and will be used to seed teams at the National Championships.

The number of teams and what teams are invited to District Championships will be decided upon by the Event Director(s) as determined by the performance of teams at District Qualifiers. Only teams who have participated in at least one District Qualifier will be invited to participate in District Championships. Teams not participating in District Qualifiers may petition US Drone Soccer to be granted entry to District Championships.

The number of teams earning a berth at the District Championships from each District Qualifier will be weighted based on the number of teams participating in each qualifier tournament. Participation in District Championships will earn points towards national rankings and will be used to seed teams at the National Championships.

2.6 National Championships

U.S. Drone Soccer will conduct an annual National Championship tournament. The number of teams and what teams participate in the National Championships will be decided upon by the Event Director(s) as determined by the performance of teams at District Championships.

The number of teams earning a berth at the National Championships from each District Championship will be weighted based on the number of teams participating in each District Championship tournament.

The team winning the National Championship tournament will be awarded the title of “Team USA” and will be awarded the right of first refusal for international competitions until the following year’s National Championships.

2.7 Points System

For events where teams earn points towards national rankings, points will be awarded based on how teams place at a tournament using the N factor, where N represents the number of teams participating in the tournament.

Placing	1	2	3	4	…	N-1	N
Points	N	N-1	N-2	N-3		2	1

In addition, bonus points are awarded for the best placed competitors at the district and national level.

For District Championships, bonus points will be awarded to the three best placed competitors as follows (rounded up to the nearest whole number):

1st Place = N/4
2nd Place = N/6
3rd Place = N/8

For National Championships, bonus points will be awarded to the five best placed competitors as follows (rounded up to the nearest whole number):

1st Place = N/2
2nd Place = N/3
3rd Place = N/4
4th Place = N/6
5th Place = N/8

2.8 Participation in International Competitions

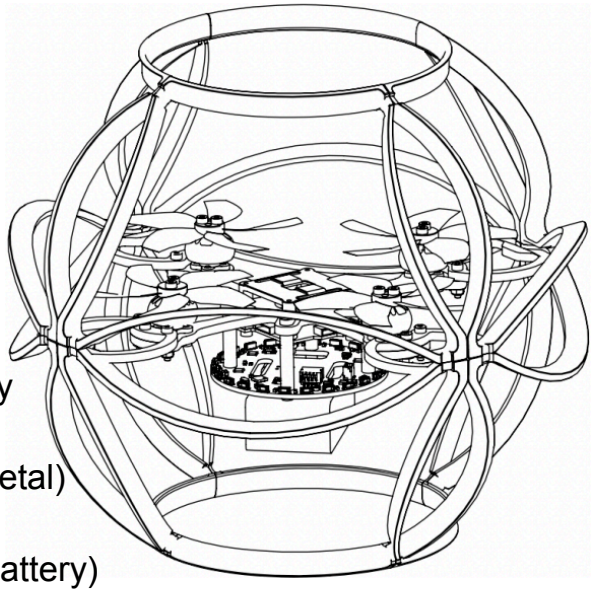
The team that wins the National Championship Tournament (Team USA) will hold the primary right to represent the United States at International competitions until the following year's National Championships.

U.S. Drone Soccer will formally invite Team USA to international competitions as early as possible. The winning team must formally accept or decline the invitation within 10 business days from the date the team is formally invited.

In the event that Team USA declines or is otherwise unable to participate, U.S. Drone Soccer reserves the right to extend the invitation to subsequent teams in consecutive order based on the official final National Rankings until a participating team is secured.

3.0 AIRCRAFT & EQUIPMENT

3.1 Drone Soccer Ball Aircraft General Specifications



High-performance aircraft designed to meet FAI F9A-B sporting code.

Drones may be modified but must stay within the following specifications:

Maximum Total Weight: **300g** including battery
Exoskeleton frame Diameter **20cm ± 2cm**
(Exoskeleton may be made of anything but metal)
Maximum Base Truncation: **2cm**
Batteries: **3S** or **4S** (number of cells in each battery)
Max Voltage Per Battery Cell: **4.2V**
Max Propeller Diameter: **7.6cm**
Radio Control (RC) Spectrum: **2.4 GHz**
Motor Type: **Electric**
Maximum motors: **4**

3.2 Required Batteries

3S-4S Lithium Polymer Battery at any milliamp hour (mah) rating.
No LiHV batteries in 2026-27.

3.3 Aircraft LEDs

Teams will be assigned red or blue LED designations for a given match. Aircraft LEDs must be switched to the assigned red or blue using that aircraft's transmitter. Drones must be equipped with LED lights that are clearly visible from all angles. Any drone lacking adequate LED visibility is ineligible to compete. If

an LED board is damaged during a set, the drone may continue for the remainder of that set provided clear visibility is maintained.

3.4 Equipment Requirements and Identification

> ⚠ ***WARNING:***
> ***Protective eyewear must be worn inside the Safety Area within ten feet of any arena, and while working at team repair tables.***
>
> **Note:**
> All Team equipment must be labeled with unique and colorful identification. This includes drones, radios, batteries, and supplies.

Teams are responsible for their own misplaced or mislabeled equipment.

3.5 Recommendations

Competitive teams may paint their exoskeleton cages using plastic paint.

4.0 TEAM COMPOSITION & PREPARATION

4.1 Team Composition

Drone Soccer is a coed (mixed) sport and teams must maintain a diverse and inclusive roster. Teams engaged in a formal U.S. Drone Soccer competition (District Championship and National Championship) are required to field a team with a minimum of one male and one female pilot in the first two sets of any Match.

A regulation Match is played by three to five active players, although teams and match officials can agree to play with equal teams of smaller size as necessary.

A team competing in a tournament with only four players can either forfeit their match or play shorthanded.

Each Team may have a maximum of ten crew members.

4.2 Pilot Substitutions

Only active players are allowed in the Team Zone during gameplay. Active pilots may not be changed during a Set. Pilot substitutions are allowed between Sets. Pilots may not swap aircraft or radio controllers during a Set.

4.3 Protective Equipment

All players and referees must wear glasses (prescription with or without side-shields are allowed) or protective eyewear when within 10ft of the arena during active gameplay.

4.4 Battery Charging Responsibilities

- All batteries must be labeled with proper team numbers.
- All batteries should arrive at competition fully charged.
- Pilots will not apply battery power to a drone outside of a netted arena.
- Teams will not charge batteries in the venue.
- Batteries will only be charged in a designated charging area by designated staff.
- Designated staff always reserves the right to confiscate any puffy, damaged, or questionable battery from competition and into a safe situation.
- Teams must bring 4 fully charged batteries per aircraft to any competition.

4.5 Tournament Preparation

Teams must be prepared for Equipment Inspection (FAI Model Processing) where each competition aircraft will be inspected by designated staff for airworthiness and adherence to technical specifications.

- Checking the integrity of aircraft exoskeleton, softly rotating the drone ball with two hands to confirm zip ties are tight.
- Checking for non-sharp edges to zip ties.
- Checking for zip tie bodies not protruding from the airframe.
- Check that the aircraft receiver body is firmly attached to the airframe and not flopping.
- Confirming all screws are firmly tightened.
- All up weight (aircraft and battery) at 300 grams or less.
- The inspection team will mark each registered model with an easily visible identification such as a sticker.

4.6 Spot Inspections

Referees may do random spot inspections of aircraft at any time before or after any Set. The 1st offense of failing a spot inspection will be a team disqualification for the set. Multiple violations will result in a team's disqualification from the Event.

4.7 District/National Championships Referee Configuration

The U.S. Drone Soccer District Championships and National Championship will be conducted with the following referee configuration:

- One Head Referee: Confirm with field referees that teams are ready to start each set.
- Two Score Keeper Referees: Enter live scores into the scoreboard. Write score on scoresheet.
- Two Goal Judge Referees: One referee works with each Team in a Match. Raises and lowers flags for scores while confirming that the entire Team has retreated to the midpoint after each score by the striker. Upon making a goal, the Goal Judge will raise the flag of the same color of the Striker that made a goal. Once that Team has completed off sides, the Goal Referee will lower their flag signaling the Striker of that Team is eligible to score again.
- Two Field Referees: One referee works with each Team in a Match. Each referee will carry from the referee table into the area of each Team's competing group of drone balls. The referee will plug in each aircraft battery prior to the start of a Set, then the referee will confirm with each Pilot that the aircraft will properly arm. The referee will leave the arena and is responsible for making sure the arena door is zipped or closed. That referee is then also responsible for watching gameplay and identifying and calling out penalties when and if they occur.
- The roles of the goal judges and field referees may be combined if deemed necessary by the Event Director(s).
- All referees must have completed referee certification prior to an event.

4.8 Match Preparation

- Players arriving at the Team Zone will only bring their drones (one spare drone per Pilot), transmitters (equal to the number of drones brought to the Team Zone), and batteries (equal to the number of drones brought to the Team Zone). Players may not bring spare parts and tools to the Team Zone. Players may not repair drones in the Team Zone.
- Teams are responsible for ensuring their drones are ready to fly.
- Teams are responsible for making their drones able to change LED colors between Blue or Red through a switch on their transmitter/radio.
- Teams will be assigned either Red or Blue colors in any match.
- All drones must be either Blue or Red and non-working LED boards will disallow that aircraft to compete in the Set.
- Teams are responsible for arriving at a Set with charged batteries strapped to the aircraft and NOT plugged in.
- Each pilot must place their aircraft on the Team Zone table at their side of the arena. The referee will carry the aircraft into the arena to then plug in each aircraft prior to the start of a Set.
- Only referees may enter the arena.
- Only crew members and official staff are allowed to enter Competition Zones.

5.0 RULES OF PLAY

5.1 Match Format & Results

Each Match consists of three 3-minute Sets.

A winner is determined for each Set based on the highest number of goals scored.

The winner of each Match is determined by the best 2 out of 3 Sets.

5.2 Set Tiebreaker/Sudden Death

In the event of a tied score at the end of a three-minute Set (including penalties), the winner is determined by immediate sudden death. Sudden death is one Striker versus one Striker with no defenders. Both Strikers are placed within their respective starting areas. Arming and liftoff is announced by the referee. The first Striker to score a goal wins that set for their team.

If the score remains tied and one Striker is unable to fly, then the remaining flying Striker's team is declared winner of that Set.

In a Sudden Death situation, a Pilot may change their battery if they have one currently at the referee table. Otherwise, they must fly with the battery currently attached. If both Strikers are unable to fly in a Set and the Set ends, then both Strikers will fly in sudden death competition with replacement Drones.

In the event that penalties are committed during Sudden Death, the penalties will be resolved after the Sudden Death. This could lead to additional Sudden Death events.

Only the Head Referee may utilize video recording to assist in determining the winner of Sudden Death.

5.3 Positions

Only the Striker on each Team can score. They must be clearly identified with Striker flags. Other than the Striker, the four defensive positions are fluid and can trade responsibilities.

5.4 Team Captain

Each team must designate a Captain who is the spokesperson for the Team during each set. Only Captains and affected pilots may interact directly with Referees during competition. A team captain must be an active pilot for that Set. Team Captains must wear something such as an armband which identifies them as the Captain.

5.5 Scoring

A point will be awarded each time a Striker successfully flies through their opponent's goal in the forward direction. The drone must pass completely through the goal. The Striker cannot pass backward through the goal in an attempt to score. (see 4.7 Penalties)

5.6 Offsides

After a successful goal, the Striker and all other Active Pilots on that Team must retreat back to and remain behind the centerline before that Striker is eligible to score again. A grounded aircraft not showing signs of activity is not required to retreat to the halfway point if that aircraft is unable to fly but must retreat behind the centerline if it becomes active again during the set. The Goal Judges will keep their flag raised until all teammates have fully retreated behind the centerline thus establishing the Team as eligible to score again. No additional points will be earned until all active pilots have retreated to the halfway mark and the Goal Judge has lowered their flag to attempt another offensive.

5.7 Penalties

The following penalties will be assessed against a team each time they occur during a set.

Direction of Flight - The Striker cannot fly through the other team’s goal from the back.

Non-Striker drones that fly through any goal in the forward direction will not be awarded points or penalized.

Goaltending - Defenders are not allowed to hover within their goal or fly through their goal in the reverse direction. All drones that enter at least halfway through a goal must fly out and around to return to play.

Controlled Flight - Drones must be flown under control to the best of a player's ability. Reckless flight that intentionally causes damage to other drones or the arena may result in penalties and/or removal from the game. Disabled drones must be immediately disarmed to prevent further damage.

Interference - Only a referee can physically interact with drones inside the arena. No player, coach, or spectator may touch a drone through the arena netting. This may result in removal from the pilot area or disqualification from the match or set.

Early Start - Players will await the referee’s signal to arm their drones and begin flight. Whilst armed, drones must remain grounded until the start signal begins the Set. Penalties will be given to pilots who fail to remain grounded until the signal to begin is given.

Misconduct - Players, coaches, and spectators must exhibit respectful conduct at all times (refer to coach, player, and spectator code of conduct). Officials may remove participants from the Match or Event for infractions or violations of the Code of Conduct.

Improper Contact - A drone may not intentionally make contact with an opposing drone that is on the ground.

Failure to comply with Referee or Event Director - Players must comply with a direct instruction from a referee or event official. Depending on the severity of the infraction, a referee may remove participants from the Set, Match or Event.

5.8 Penalty Shot

For a violation of any of the above rules, a Penalty Shot may be granted by the Referee. Penalty Shots will be announced during gameplay but conducted at the end of each Set.

- Penalties for each side cancel out - only remaining penalty shots will be conducted. For example, if the Red team has 3 penalties, and the Blue team has 2, the penalties will offset and the Red team will be left with only one penalty (3 - 2 = 1).
- Ten seconds of extra time will be allotted per Penalty.
- The awarded Striker will attack against a single defender, selected by the defending Captains.
- In a penalty shot situation, a Pilot may change their battery if they have one currently at the referee table. Otherwise, they must fly with the battery currently attached.
- The Striker may attempt multiple goals during extra time by retreating back across the center line.
- Off-sides still applies to penalty shots, the Striker must return to his or her side in order to score multiple goals.

5.9 Upside Down or Stuck Drone

Drones who are stuck upside down may utilize “turtle mode” or "flip over after crash” to right itself, or have a teammate’s drone bump the drone upright. If a drone is stuck on a part of the arena (i.e., in the netting or under the mat), the Team Captain may notify the referee who will evaluate the situation and potentially free it. Players are not allowed to touch the drones.

5.10 Disabled Non-Striker Drones

A drone that cannot continue flight must be immediately disarmed and their team will continue gameplay shorthanded for the remainder of the Set.

If a battery is dangling below a drone in flight, that drone must be immediately disarmed and their team will continue gameplay shorthanded.

5.11 Disabled Striker

During gameplay, if a Striker becomes unable to fly (Disabled Striker), the Team Captain will call out to the Head Referee “Striker down” to notify the Referee, who then stops play.

- At stop of play, all drones will land.
- The referee will unplug the Disabled Striker and remove it from the arena.
- A different active pilot will be appointed Striker and his/her drone will be placed in the start area of their Start Zone.
- Flags will be adjusted on the new Striker, which will be placed in the Start Zone and serve as Striker.
- Play will resume with remaining drones from current positions on the referees command.
- Swapping Strikers may only occur once per Set for each Team.

5.12 Escaped Aircraft

In the event that an aircraft leaves the arena, the Head Referee will call a time out and will command all pilots to land and disable their drones. Referees may assist a pilot who is having difficulty landing their aircraft.

5.13 Repair Intervals

After each Set, teams will have a Repair Interval to allow for aircraft maintenance and repair. All Active Players and their aircraft must remain at the arena until the start of the Repair Interval. Failure to do so will result in the disqualification of the Active Player from the next Set.

Repair Intervals will last for at least five minutes unless otherwise extended by the Event Director(s). Repair intervals will be noted and tracked via use of the arena's scoreboard.

Active Players who fail to fully arrive to their arena before the end of the Repair Interval will be disqualified from participating in the upcoming Set.

5.14 Rules Exceptions

U.S Drone. Soccer acknowledges that rule sets change to meet needs and address new situations. In the event that a referee encounters a situation that is not defined by this rule set, the following procedure will be followed.

- The Head Referee will pause gameplay and pull together all referee staff at the arena and include the Event Director(s) in an adhoc judging panel.
- Referees will unplug batteries from all aircraft to preserve the state of the field of play at the time gameplay is paused.
- The panel may include other Head Referees if available and non-disruptive to gameplay in other arenas.
- The Head Referee will brief both Team Captains simultaneously to gather brief statements before the panel.
- The panel will temporarily dismiss both Team Captains to their respective Team Areas, and then create a ruling.
- In the event that the panel cannot create a ruling with consensus, the Head Referee retains final authority.
- The Head Referee will discuss the ruling with both Team Captains.
- The Head Referee will announce the ruling to the spectators.

Within 72 hours following the event, the Event Director(s) will share the situation and the panel's decision with U.S. Drone Soccer for a potential update to the rules set.

5.15 Practice Flights

Practice sessions may be organized. The Event Director(s) has the responsibility to define the conditions of the practice sessions which must be the same for all teams.
Flights other than those authorised by the organiser are strictly forbidden. In case of a violation of that rule, a penalty going up to disqualification from the event of the entire team may arise (See 4.7 Penalties).

6. GAMEPLAY

6.1 Referee Commands and Stoppages

A timer will count down from three minutes per Set, and pause during stoppages.

- The game only stops for a referee whistle or game horn. Verbal commands from the referees or scorekeepers are for individuals and do not stop gameplay, although the referee may command a particular pilot to "DISARM".
- Referees may stop play at any time for safety, or for a Disabled Striker when a timeout is called by the Team Captain. Penalties will not stop gameplay, and will be addressed at the end of Set.
- Pilots will remain disarmed at all times until commanded to "ARM YOUR DRONES" by the referee.

6.2 Prior to Each Set

- Captains will check in with referees and/or scorekeepers to verify pilots participating in the Set.
- Teams will clearly designate a Striker before each Set using flags. Flags will be provided by the event hosts.

- Each drone should have a charged battery securely attached to the drone, with the power cable disconnected.
- Teams will monitor start time and ensure all drones are placed on the team's designated table prior to Set start. Teams may place additional spare drone balls (with battery and radio).
- Teams who do not have drones ready at Set start time will compete shorthanded or otherwise forfeit that Set.

6.3 Set Start

Referees (R) will place all drones into the respective Start Zone, oriented in the correct direction. Obey referee commands to verify arming, only two attempts will be made to establish a drone connection before a spare will be utilized (if available).

> ⚠ ***WARNING:***
> ***Do not attempt to arm while the aircraft is being handled.***
> ***Failure to follow these procedures may result in injury.***

1. PLACE DRONE IN START ZONE (R).....COMPLETE
2. ON COMMAND (R).....“RADIOS ON”
3. RADIO POWER (P)…… ON
4. BATTERY CABLE (R)…….…….. CONNECT
5. FLIGHT AREA……..……..CLEAR
6. ON COMMAND (R).....“ARM YOUR DRONES”
7. THROTTLE (P).....IDLE
8. RADIO ARMING SWITCH (P)…….ON
    a. Verify propellers are spinning at idle power
9. ON LIFTOFF, FLIGHT TIMER (3 MIN)....……..…… START

6.4 “Turtle Mode” or Flip Over After Crash

During gameplay, pilots must be able to recover their own drone. To activate Turtle Mode and recover:

1. THROTTLE…….....IDLE
2. RADIO ARMING SWITCH.....DISARM
3. TURTLE MODE SWITCH.....PRESS & HOLD
4. RIGHT STICK.....FULL FORWARD
    a. Wait for drone to settle in an upright position
5. RADIO ARMING SWITCH.....DISARM, ARM

⚠ ***WARNING:*** ***Do not connect power to a drone outside of a netted flying area.***
⚠ ***WARNING:*** ***Battery charging is conducted by event officials. Do not charge batteries outside of designated charging area.***
Note: A positive attitude, respect, and fair play are expected at all times.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact info@USDroneSoccer.org