

# BUCS AMERICAN FOOTBALL REGULATIONS

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**AMF i** The BUCS American Football Championships shall be conducted in accordance with the following BUCS sport specific regulations, the BUCS general regulations, and the British American Football Association (BAFA) Rulebook.

**AMF ii** In the event that these regulations contradict the BUCS general regulations these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

**AMF iii** In the event that these regulations contradict the British American Football Association (BAFA) Rulebook, these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

**\*Notification of changes to BAFA rulebook for 2024-25 season and 2025-26 season\***

See [here](#) for changes to the BAFA rulebook for the 2024-25 season and [here](#) for the changes for the 2023-24 season which gives advance notice of some further changes for the 2025-26 season.

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**AMF 1 Open Championships** There shall be an Open Team Championships. Open Championships have no gender-based eligibility requirements and individuals may participate whatever their gender identity. The programme shall include leagues and knockout competitions as per BUCS general regulations, Appendix 1 ('BUCS Competition Offer and Associated BUCS Points') and Appendix 10 ('BUCS Promotion, Relegation and Knockout Information').

**AMF 2 Affiliations** All institutions/Playing Entities, players, coaches and sideline personnel must be affiliated as per the requirements of the BUCS Sport Specific Affiliations Document. Failure to affiliate by the deadlines stated in the BUCS Sport Specific Affiliations Document will result in sanctions being imposed as outlined in the BUCS Sport Specific Affiliations Document and the possibility of further disciplinary action.

**AMF 3 Playing surface** All matches should be played on surfaces which meet the requirements of BAFA Rule 1-2-9. It is the responsibility of the first named (home) team when confirming the fixture (note REG 9.5) to advise the opposition team and all match officials of the playing surface and on any footwear restrictions (note REG 9.3.3).

## **AMF 4 Goalposts**

**AMF 4.1 Premier Tier leagues and National Championship and National Vase knockout competitions** Matches shall be played with goalposts as a minimum standard.

**AMF 4.2 All other leagues and knockout competitions** Teams can agree to play without goalposts.

**AMF 5 Duration of play** BAFA Rule 3-2-1 is amended so that the maximum total playing time shall be 48 minutes, divided into four periods of 12 minutes each, with one-minute intermissions between the first and second periods (first half) and between the third and fourth periods (second half).

**AMF 6 Ties in league matches** A tie can occur in a league match and it shall be recorded as a draw.

**AMF 7 Ties in knockout matches** Ties are not permitted in knockout matches. If at the end of the fourth period the score is tied, then extra periods shall be played as per BAFA Rule 3-1-3.

**AMF 8 Fixture confirmation** REG 9.5 shall apply, however as well as communicating fixture confirmation information to the away team's Athletic Union (or equivalent) in writing, via their own Athletic Union (or equivalent), home teams should also ensure that this is communicated to BAFRA/any appointed officials.

#### **AMF 9 Match officials and officials' assistants**

**AMF 9.1** BAFRA (British American Football Referees Association) endeavours to appoint officials to as many BUCS American Football fixtures as possible. Appointments are based on the availability of officials geographically and teams are informed as soon as appointments are confirmed throughout the season by BAFRA. The minimum appointment is outlined in Appendix 5 ('BUCS Match Officials Requirements').

**AMF 9.2** If a BAFRA Officials Crew assigned to a fixture do not turn up the game will be postponed unless both Head Coaches agree to the game taking place with interim officials as per AMF 9.4.

**AMF 9.3** If BAFRA cannot provide officials for a fixture and the teams have been notified of this at least 48 hours (outside of weekends and bank holidays) before the fixture start time, then the teams must make provision for the game to take place with interim officials as per AMF 9.4.

**AMF 9.4** Where interim officials are to be used:

**AMF 9.4.1** Unless otherwise agreed in writing by both teams before the start of play, as a minimum, the home team must provide the Referee and a Line Judge, and the away team a Head Linesman. Under no circumstances may a game commence, nor proceed if suspended, if there are fewer than three interim officials. If a fourth interim official is available (from either team), they will act as Umpire.

**AMF 9.4.2** All interim officials must be licensed (as defined in BAFA Rule 13-8-4/Rule 13-8-5), meet the minimum officiating requirement (as defined in BAFA Rule 13-8-6-e) and have undertaken the reading of the rules of the game as provided by BAFA and the BUCS sport specific regulations.

**AMF 9.4.3** Interim officials should refer to the BAFA Guide to Self-Officiating including all appendices and complete the Game Day Audit/Checklist.

**AMF 9.4.4** The name of each interim official, the club they are registered with and which team provided them shall be recorded on both teams' rosters (see AMF 12) which shall be submitted to both BAFRA and BUCS after the game.

**AMF 9.4.5** Interim officials will have the same powers as appointed officials and must be treated with equal respect.

**AMF 9.5** Officials provided by BAFRA must be paid in accordance with the BAFRA Terms and Conditions which are detailed in the BAFA Rulebook. Interim officials will be paid as per any agreement made between them and the home team.

**AMF 9.6** The home team must provide three people for the chain crew and at least one ball person. The away team is responsible for providing a ball person for their own sideline. If a team does not have enough people to man these tasks, they must remove players from their playing squad to cover this. Playing squad members nominated to fulfil chain crew and ball person duties are interchangeable at appropriate times throughout the fixture but must be wearing clothing other than the playing uniform.

**AMF 10 Minimum number of players for a fixture to start or continue** In relation to BAFA regulation 5.1 and BAFA rule 13-8-6, the minimum number of players required for a fixture to start will be 22.

#### **AMF 11 Coaches**

**AMF 11.1** In relation to BAFA rule 13-8-6 and BAFA regulation 5.1, for each match, each team must have, at the field, a minimum of three licensed (as defined in BAFA rule 13-8-4) coaches who all hold at least a current valid BAFCA level 1 qualification. One of the three coaches must hold a current valid BAFCA level 2 or higher qualification. As per BAFA rule 13-8-6, this minimum only needs to be met at the scheduled kick-off time; thereafter the minimum number is one who must be on the sideline at all times.

**AMF 11.2** Teams should show their opposition and the Referee a form listing all registered coaches obtained from the BAFA membership website. This can be viewed online or printed in hard copy as long as the date it was generated is shown.

**AMF 12 Roster** Before each match, in addition to completing BUCS Team Sheets as per REG 11.2, teams must supply the Referee with a roster listing all players, coaches and other sideline personnel as per BAFA regulation 5. All individuals on this roster must meet the requirements of AMF 2. A BAFRA Roster Form should be used, but if a team does not have one available then an alternative form can be submitted as long as it captures the same required information.

**AMF 13 Playing conditions** Should the match officials (including interim officials) deem the game unplayable due to the conditions then the game must not take place on that field for the remainder of the day pending a favourable reinspection by said officials. Alternative fields can be sought and approved by the officials present.

#### **AMF 14 League points**

**AMF 14.1** Two points will be awarded for a win, one point for a draw and no points for a loss.

**AMF 14.2** Where a walkover has been awarded/conceded (REG 13), two points shall be given to the non-offending team and two points deducted from the offending team.

**AMF 14.3** No points will be awarded to either team in the case of a void fixture.

#### **AMF 15 Calculating final league positions**

**AMF 15.1** Final league positions will be primarily based on league points accumulated. However, should there be any ties on points within a league, they shall be split by the following sequential system:

**AMF 15.2** A team tied on points who has conceded at least one voluntary walkover shall automatically be placed below any other tied teams who have conceded fewer voluntary walkovers. If a tie still exists, then AMF 10.3 or AMF 10.4 shall be followed as applicable.

#### **AMF 15.3 Tie between two teams**

**AMF 15.3.1** Where two teams are tied on league points, the result between the teams will be the determining factor in placing one team above the other. Where fixtures are played on a 'home' and 'away' basis, the aggregate score of the two matches will determine the higher placed team. If this does not determine the higher placed team;

**AMF 15.3.2** Average points conceded shall be used to determine the higher placed team. If the tie on league points has been effected by any walkovers conceded to them or any void fixtures, all the relevant results against the team(s) which conceded the

walkover(s) or the team(s) involved in the void fixtures (i.e. all the results between the teams tied on league points and the team(s) conceding the walkover(s)/void match(es)) will be removed from the results table and the recalculated average points conceded shall be used to determine the higher placed team.

**AMF 15.3.3** If the higher placed team cannot be determined from the system above, then this shall be determined by the toss of a coin by the BUCS Executive.

#### **AMF 15.4 Tie between three or more teams**

**AMF 15.4.1** Where three or more teams are tied on league points, a table shall be formed to calculate their final league positions using the results between the relevant teams as per AMF 15.4.2 - AMF 15.4.3.

**AMF 15.4.2** The teams tied will be ranked based on league points accumulated (the higher the better). If a tie still exists;

**AMF 15.4.3** The teams tied will be ranked based on average points conceded (the lower the better).

**AMF 15.4.4** If a tie cannot be broken using the system above, then the final league positions of any teams still tied shall be determined by the toss of a coin by the BUCS Executive.

#### **AMF 16 Knockout competition draws**

**AMF 16.1 National Championship** For the National Championship knockout competition, the Semi-Final draw, involving the top four teams from the Premier Tier National league, will be determined based on league positions. There will be no seeding, and teams will progress through a pre-determined bracket draw with the first named (home) teams hosting the Semi-Final matches.

**AMF 16.2 National Vase** For the National Vase knockout competition, the Quarter-Final draw, involving the top four teams from the Premier Tier North and South leagues, will be determined based on league positions. There will be no seeding, and teams will progress through a pre-determined bracket draw with the first named (home) teams hosting the Quarter-Final and Semi-Final matches.

**AMF 16.2 National Trophy** For the National Trophy knockout competition, the Round of 16 draw involves the top two teams from each Tier 1 league, plus the two best performing 3rd placed teams from the three 'North' leagues and the two best performing 3rd placed teams from the three 'South' leagues. The best performing teams shall be calculated through the application of REG 8.4.3.1. Teams will progress through a pre-determined bracket draw, split 'North' and 'South', with the first named (home) team hosting the Round of 16, Quarter-Final and Semi-Final matches. Within these brackets, the initial draw will be based on 'seedings' calculated using the application of REG 8.4.3.1 across first placed teams, then second placed teams and then third placed teams.

**AMF 16.3 Conference Cups** For the Conference Cup North and South knockout competitions, the Quarter-Final draws will involve the top two teams from each of the respective Tier 2 leagues, plus the two best performing 3rd placed teams from these leagues. The best performing teams shall be calculated through the application of REG 8.4.3.1. Teams will progress through a pre-determined bracket draw with the first named (home) team hosting the Quarter-Final and Semi-Final matches. The initial draw will be based on 'seedings' calculated

using the application of REG 8.4.3.1 across first placed teams, then second placed teams and then third placed teams.