

U13-U17 Qualification for Aspire Playoffs

1. Automatic Qualifiers (14)

- a. (1) Allocation per Conference for a total of (12)
 - i. Based on points per game (ppg) from conference games only.
- b. (2) Event Qualifiers
 - i. Based on (1) winner per super group competition at Aspire Events:
 - 1. U13 & U14 Qualifiers: (1) East Regional & (1) West Regional
 - 2. U15-U17 Qualifiers: (1) East Showcase, (1) West Showcase
- c. If a team qualifies through both a conference allocation and an event allocation, the duplicate playoff spot will be reassigned as a wildcard berth.

2. Wild Card Allocations (2)

- a. In the inaugural year of the Aspire League, the priority is to identify and include the strongest possible teams at the Aspire Finals. Accordingly, wildcard selections will not be based on a single metric, but on a holistic review of multiple factors, including but not limited to:
 - i. Performance in conference and event play (results and PPG).
 - ii. Overall quality and competitive level of the team's conference.
 - iii. Demonstrated program strength and ability to compete nationally.
 - iv. Performance in the previous GA season, where relevant.
 - v. Additional information provided directly by clubs upon request.
- b. This flexible, year-one approach ensures that wildcards reflect both on-field performance and overall program quality

3. If two or more teams are tied, based on points per game (ppg), for automatic qualification in a conference, the tiebreakers are:

- a. total points earned head-to-head (NA if more than 2 teams are tied)
- b. greatest goal difference per game in all conference league games (gd)
- c. greatest number of goals scored per game in all conference league games (gf)
- d. least number of goals allowed per game in all conference league games (ga)
- e. total number of wins in conference league play

4. Playoff Structure Overview

- a. Playoffs is a 16-team group play, round robin competition, followed by semifinals and finals to determine the GA Aspire National Champion.
- b. The playoffs will take place over six (6) days to crown the GA National Champion.

5. Playoffs

- a. Groupings/Draw
 - i. All qualifying teams will be ranked 1-16 based on points per game (ppg) from all conference, cross-conference and national event matches.
 - ii. All qualifying teams will be placed into four (4) pods of four (4) teams based on seeding listed in the National Standings.
 - 1. Pod 1 will include the four (4) highest ranked teams based on the National Standings.

2. Pod 2 will include teams ranked 5-8 based on the National Standings.
 - a. Teams will be randomly drawn from each pod. If a team is drawn into a group that already includes a conference member, then the team will be placed back into the pod and a new team will be selected.
3. Pod 3 will include teams ranked 9-12 based on the National Standings.
 - a. Teams will be randomly drawn from each pod. If a team is drawn into a group that already includes a conference member, then the team will be placed back into the pod and a new team will be selected.
4. Pod 4 will include teams ranked 13-16 based on the National Standings
 - a. Teams will be randomly drawn for each pod. If a team is drawn into a group that already includes a conference member, then the team will be placed back into the pod and a new team will be selected.

b. Schedule & Advancement

i. Overview

1. Teams will play a three (3) game round robin.
2. Teams will earn:
 - a. Three points for a win One point for a tie Zero points for a loss Forfeit = 0-3 loss
 - b. Each group winner will advance to the semi-finals.
3. Schedule
 - a. Day 1 - Game 1: 1 vs 4, 2 vs 3
 - b. Day 2 - Game 2: 1 vs 3, 2 vs 4
 - c. Day 3 - Game 3: 1 vs 2, 3 vs 4
 - d. Day 4 - Off or Inclement Weather Day
 - e. Day 5 - Semi-Finals
 - f. Day 6 - National Championship
4. Tiebreakers
 - a. If two (2) teams are tied after group play is complete, the tiebreaker will be as follows:
 1. Total points earned head-to-head (if only 2 teams tied)
 2. Goal difference in group play
 3. Goals for in group play
 4. Goals against in group play
 5. Penalty Kicks
 1. If tied, the winner shall be the team that scores the most in five (5) penalty kicks.
 2. If tied after five (5) penalty kicks, the winner shall be determined by sudden death in rounds of on (1)

kick per team.

c. Semifinal and Finals

i. Overview

1. The Aspire National Championships shall be composed of the four (4) group winners.
2. There is no 3rd place match

ii. Groupings/Draw

1. In each age group, the qualifying teams will be paired in the semi-finals based on points per game (ppg) from all conference, cross-conference and national event matches listed in the National Standings.

iii. Structure

1. Match 1: Highest Ranked Team vs Lowest Ranked Team
2. Match 2: 2nd Highest Rank Team vs 3rd Highest Ranked Team
 - a. In the event of a tie at the end of regulation in a knockout match, then two (2) ten-minute overtime periods shall be played with no golden goal during the overtime periods.
3. Overtime Substitutions
 - a. Once a player is substituted in any period of overtime of any Advancement Game, then such player may not re-enter the game.
 - b. Advancement Games shall permit a maximum of three (3) moments across both halves of overtime with a maximum of two (2) moments per half.
 - i. The stoppage between each period of overtime does not count as a moment.
 - c. The overtime periods shall permit a maximum of seven (7) substitutes total.
4. If the match remains tied at the end of the overtime periods, then the winner shall be determined by penalty kicks.
 - a. The winner shall be the team that scores the most in five (5) penalty kicks.
 - b. If tied after five (5) penalty kicks, the winner shall be determined by sudden death in rounds of one (1) kick per team.