

RULES & REGULATIONS

Table of contents

1 Introduction **3**
- 1.1 About NSL Sports 3
- 1.2 Regional Partners 3

2 Field & Arena **4**
- 2.1 Field size and structure 4
- 2.2 Obstacles and layout 4
- 2.3 Field boundaries and safety 4
- 2.4 Liability waiver 5

3 NSL Official 5v5 **5**
- 3.1 Game format 5v5 5
- 3.2 Game sequence 6
  - 3.2.1 Attacking team 6
  - 3.2.2 Defending team 7
- 3.3 Player identification 7
- 3.4 Buzzer 7
- 3.5 Mercy rule 8

4 Referees **9**
- 4.1 Referee team 9
- 4.2 Officiating 9
- 4.3 Referee signals 9
- 4.4 VAR (Video Assisted Referee) 10

5 Teams **11**
- 5.1 Team captains 11
- 5.2 Players and roster 11
- 5.3 Spectators 11

6 Scoring **12**
- 6.1 Points 12
- 6.2 Standings and Seeding points - Tiebreakers 13
- 6.3 Penalties 14
- 6.4 Game-altering play 17

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6.5 Penalties in the last 30 seconds of a match 18
6.6 Disqualifications 18
6.7 Enforcement 19
7 Eliminations 20
7.1 Definitions of eliminations 20
7.2 Player calling hits 20
7.3 Referee calling hits 20
8 Equipment 22
8.1 Replicas 22
8.2 BB's and tracer units 22
8.3 Magazines 22
8.4 Firing mode 23
8.5 Goggle/Face mask 23
8.6 Clothing 23
8.7 Prohibited equipment 23
9 3-vs.-3 Rule adjustment 24
10 Pulse 24
11 Filming and photography 25
11.1 Consent waiver 25
11.2 Content sharing 25
11.3 Filming by players 25
11.4 3rd party filming and photography 25
Appendix A - NSL Layout 26

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1 Introduction

1.1 About NSL Sports

NSL® is our trademark brand of competitive airsoft and the first neutral association for speedsoft. We do not allow the use of our name or logo without our express written permission. The proper presentation of NSL is very important to us. We rely on equality and fairness to secure the integrity of our sport.

1.2 Regional Partners

Our goal is to unite international regions with Official NSL Ranked Tournaments. We seek to establish positive, long-term relationships with partners who share our commitment to pushing our sport to the next level. We will only authorize partners who are committed to providing the same NSL experience for their teams and players.

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2 Field & Arena

2.1 Field size and structure

For all details concerning official NSL field dimensions and adjacent facilities, please contact us through the contact form on our website..

2.2 Obstacles and layout

- NSL uses a standardized set of obstacles (“hardcover bunkers”). Inflatable bunkers are not allowed for any official events.
- These obstacles are arranged in specific layouts for NSL ranked events[1].
- The official field layout and/or obstacle designs will be updated yearly. The current layout for a given year is used for all C-, B-, A- & S-Tier and NSL branded events such as 3vs3, Pulse & Showdown.

2.3 Field boundaries and safety

- Only the staff and athletes competing in the current match are allowed on the arena floor.
- All spectators and non-playing athletes must be in the designated zones outside of the playing area.
- All hosting fields are responsible for following the safety protocols in accordance with local legislation to ensure the safety of the staff, athletes, and spectators.
- For each event the organization can decide if they allow players to jump bunkers during games.
- All hip-sized bunkers are considered jumpable ones, except the outside of “plexi”.
- Direct jumping over or through a bunker is not allowed.
- Touching the bunker with the sole of the player's shoes during the jump is allowed to ensure a safe crossing. Pushing the player upwards with that foot connected is not allowed.
- Resting/pausing mid-jump on a bunker is not allowed. The jump needs to be a fluid movement and can not be canceled.
- When jumping a bunker a body part needs to make physical contact with the bunker during the process of jumping it.
- Shooting under bunkers or through gaps that are not intended to be there is not allowed.

[1] Non-ranked events may use custom layouts, using the approved obstacles (must be approved).

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2.4 Liability waiver

- All players must sign a liability waiver covering a season, provided by the organizer or field owner, stipulating the conditions under which they allow players to participate.
- The organizer or field owner is responsible for providing a waiver in (the) appropriate language(s) for the event.
- The liability waiver may or may not be combined with the consent waiver (see 9.1).

3 NSL Official 5v5

3.1 Game format 5v5

- NSL is played with two teams that consist of 5 players each. One team will be "attacking", and the other team "defending".
- The attacking team is in possession of the Flag from the beginning and gets 3 consecutive attempts ('tries') to score Points (see 3.2.1).
- The defending team tries to prevent the attacking team from scoring, but cannot earn any points (see 3.2.2).
- After 3 tries, possession of the flag will automatically change to the opposing team, who will then become the attacking team and play their 3 tries.
- The objective of each match is to obtain the most points after all rounds are played.
- Points can be earned by passing marked lines on the floor into one of the point zones holding the flag, or by touching ("hanging") the flag on the opposing sides' wall within the designated limits ("breakout wall"). In order to score, the entire body of the player, including all parts of their gear, needs to cross the marked line.
- Each match has a maximum duration of 15 minutes[2].
- The final and the game for third place will always be played for a duration of 15 minutes.
- A try ends when a team hangs the flag, the defending team touches the flag or the breakout wall ("snatch"), if the game is stopped by a buzzer or when the match clock expires. A snatch only counts if the flag is touched by the player's hand or by touching the opposing team's breakout wall as long as the buzzer has not been pressed by the attackers.
- The attacking team chooses on which side they start their tries. All tries in that round, including a Bonus Try (see 6.1) will be started from the chosen side. After the '20 seconds' call has been given, the attacking team's side decision becomes final and it cannot be changed anymore. When the tries end and the teams switch roles, the new attacking team now has their choice of which side they start their tries.

[2] Match duration may vary throughout different league systems or event formats.

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3.2 Game sequence

- Each team starts at their breakout wall, following the attacking teams' choice of side.
- All replica barrels must be physically touching the breakout wall.
- At least one foot of each player must be physically touching the breakout wall.
- The Head Referee gives both teams the pre-game ready warning ("Feet! Weapons!").
- The Head Referee starts the match with an air horn and starts the game clock.
- After each try ends, the next try starts in 120 seconds.
- Teams are allowed to have "pit crews" to swap mags, equipment, etc between tries during the 120-second reset time.

3.2.1 Attacking team

- The attacking team has up to 3 tries in a row ("round") to score points (see 6.1).
- After 3 tries without a flag hang the possession of the flag changes to the opposing team in the next round.
- If the attacking team is able to score a flag hang, the Bonus Point Try (1v1) will take place (see 6.1). The attacker will start on the same side that his team selected for the preceding attacking tries. After that, the possession of the flag changes to the opposing team.
- The flag can be in possession of an attacking player once, meaning that if the player loses possession, the flag cannot be touched by that player again during the try.
- The flag may be passed on to another team member by handing it over directly. This does not count as losing possession as mentioned above. Throwing, sliding or moving the flag in any other way is not allowed.
- The flag may be dropped on the floor, however, the player dropping the flag may not pick it up again during the try. Other team members (who didn't drop the flag earlier during the try) may pick the flag up.
- The flag may not be covered intentionally by gear or other objects to obscure it from the opponent teams' view. It will result in an automatic snatch for the opposing team.
- If a player who is still alive wants to get rid of flag possession he needs to lay the flag onto the ground. It is not allowed to lay it over or onto a bunker.
- A player who loses the flag possession intentionally or unintentionally is not allowed to re-pick up the flag. This should result in a pull without a penalty.
- A flag hang or zone points from a player not allowed to have flag possession will result in a zero-point try.
- The flag is not allowed to be folded or rolled up to carry. It can be bunched up in the hand.
- If the flag lays in a scoring zone and a defending player snatches it, the according zone points will be awarded.

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3.2.2 Defending team

- The goal of the defending team is to prevent the attacking team from scoring points in any way.
- Prevention can be done by:
  - shooting all opposing players.
  - snatching the flag by touching the flag (immediate change of flag possession).
  - touching the breakout wall of the attacking team (without flag), before the buzzer sounded for the first time (it doesn't matter how many attackers are alive), also changing possession of the flag.

3.3 Player identification

- Every player needs to have a player number, unique within their team roster, that needs to be clearly visible, preferably on the jersey (front, back, arms) or on the mask. Numbers should consist of one or two digits.
- Additionally, a personal color can be assigned to each player, which will be made visible by a colored arm or wristband and matching colored straps on their mask. Other means of identifying players can also be used.
- The identification is used to help referees identify players more easily (see 7.3) and will be checked before each match by the referees.
- For the 2025 season, only numbers between 01-99 will be accepted.
- For the 2025 season, it will be mandatory for each player to have their number on the back and on both arms.
- All players of a team need to have the same jersey design while playing on the field. Small variations, such as different sponsors can be accepted.
- The organization can make exceptions to the player identification requirements before a tournament under special circumstances.

3.4 Buzzer

- THE BUZZER BECOMES ACTIVE 30 SECONDS AFTER THE TRY STARTS. BEFORE THAT, THE BUZZER WILL NOT SOUND OR DO ANYTHING ELSE.
- The defending team can sound a buzzer (activated by hitting a button located in their death box) when the last player of that team is hit. After the buzzer sounds, the attacking team has 3 seconds to end the try by scoring a flag hang or getting as far toward the opposing breakout wall with the flag as they can.
- The attacking team can sound the buzzer (activated by hitting a button located in their death box) when the last player of their team is hit. After the buzzer sounds, the defending team has 3 seconds to end the try by attempting a snatch by touching the

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flag. The defenders cannot snatch at the breakout wall anymore after the buzzer gets activated.

- Intentional 'self-callouts' (suicide) without a BB hitting the player in order to force the buzzer are not allowed.
- 'Team killing' a player in order to reduce bodies to be able to 'leave' a try is not allowed. Every buzzer press within 15 seconds after a team kill will be considered game altering, even if the team kill was unintentional.

3.5 Mercy rule

- In case a team achieves a bigger point difference to their opposing team in a match than +34, the match will be automatically won by the leading team.
- In case of a no-show of a team, the score will be 35-0 for the other team.

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4 Referees

4.1 Referee team

- A tournament is run by a host sitting next to the field with direct or indirect vision (through cameras) and active communication to the referee team.
- The host is responsible for:
  - recording & overviewing scores, penalties and data
  - managing the flow of the tournament (schedule)
  - managing the game clock
  - operating the VAR
  - tracking the VAR check amounts
  - having the final say in all ref decision if needed
- Head referees are responsible for:
  - controlling the general flow of the game
  - team-ready warnings
  - watching the flag
  - making any final on-field decisions

Head refs are supported by a team of at least 5 referees having their own position on the playing field. Players are to follow all referees' calls. A referee may call a player out at all times. Discussions about or refusals towards the referees will result in a penalty and can cause disqualification as it disrupts the game.

4.2 Officiating

- Referees have full power to call hits upon players and pull players during live matches.
- Referees have the final call on any disagreement or decision on the field towards players, teams and spectators.
- Everything a referee sees is a referee call. Referees & Host will determine the right judgement of each pull. These decisions are not up for debate.

4.3 Referee signals

- Each referee on the field must be in uniform for immediate recognition.
- Field referees are tasked with coverage of their designated zone in the playing area, looking for hits and penalties.
- If the hit player does not immediately leave the field, the referee will move directly to the player to verbally and physically (if needed) notify the player of the hit.

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- Hit players, upon hearing/seeing a referee make the call, must go to the penalty box immediately, to the closest sideline, using the shortest route, unless avoiding an active engagement.
- Referees making the call must notify the Head Ref after the round is concluded to determine the penalty and overall outcome of a game.
- When conflicting calls are made due to different lines of sight, refs will convene to determine the best and most accurate call.
- If the host mistakenly ends the game, for example because a player pretends to hang the flag while not having it, or by 'faking' a snatch, the other team will be rewarded a snatch or hang.
- If a situation occurs in which the phrasing within the rulebook is not clear enough, the host, together with the head ref, can apply penalties in adherence with existing penalties, and the overall vision of the game.

4.4 VAR (Video Assisted Referee)

Tournaments can have a VAR (Video Assisted Referee) in place. The Host will operate the VAR. The VAR will support the referees on the field. The VAR will not check for Hit No Calls unless a referee saw a potential Headshot No Call. Headshot No Calls always need to be confirmed by the VAR. If no confirmation is possible through VAR checks, the penalty given will be decreased to a 1st degree penalty. The main purpose of the VAR should be to help with every critical decision, other than Hit No Calls.

Each team starts a tournament with 3 challenges. The team that wants to challenge a referee decision or wants a situation to be reviewed by the VAR, needs to inform the head ref as soon as possible, but no later than the start of the next try from the other teams, and a challenge is then used. The head ref will always gather in the middle of the field. The VAR will check all available sources to determine whether or not the challenge is valid. In case of a positive challenge, the challenging team will receive their challenge back. The checked situation will be rejudged based on the video footage. This can include reducing penalty degree, changing scoring/snatch outcome, removing a penalty completely or applying a penalty on the other team. If the VAR picks up a penalty on the team that asked for the challenge, the team can be punished for this retroactively. Should this happen, this will not influence the validation of the challenge. If the challenge is not validated by VAR call, the team loses the challenge. Once all of the team's challenges are used, the team loses its ability to challenge further referee decisions.
2nd degree penalties related to a "no call" can't be challenged by the teams at any time.

If evidence is presented after a game is played, suggesting a wrong call by referees or VAR and the footage proves it, a penalty can be removed from that player. Evidence in this case

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will not lead to a rematch or change the outcome of the match. However, the penalty count of that player/team can be reduced.

5 Teams

5.1 Team captains

One player from each team must take the role of team captain. Team captains are responsible for:

- Being the contact person for the team/league communication.
- All team members' behavior, on and off the field.
- Representing the team at the team captains' briefing.
- Consulting with the head referee concerning referee decisions (other team members are not allowed to do this).

5.2 Players and roster

- Teams must have a minimum roster of 5 players. Up to 12 players are allowed to participate during the course of an event and season. A team cannot split up into multiple 5-player teams.
- Switching teams during a tournament is not allowed, each ‘split’ team is treated as a unique team.
- For ProSeries and Nations Cup and the B-Tier leagues, special rules regarding the team roster are applied.

5.3 Spectators

All audience members, including inactive team members, are not allowed to speak to, give directions to or encourage teams playing, in order to prevent players, teams, and referees from being influenced or distracted. All non-competing players and spectators must stay in the designated areas. Specifically, 10 seconds before the try starts (roughly when the ‘Feet!’ call is heard), verbal and physical communication should stop altogether. Failure to comply with this rule will result in non-playing spectators being removed from the venue and spectating players being awarded an administrative penalty.

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6 Scoring

6.1 Points

- Teams can score points during their tries ('try points'), to determine the winner of a match.
- The team with the most try points after a match wins.
- The total amount of try points possible to earn is 14 (12 + 2 Bonus) per round.
- Try Points are earned for the following actions:
    - Enter Zone 1 = 1 Try Point
    - Enter Zone 2 = 2 Try Points
    - Enter Zone 3 = 3 Try Points
    - Flag Hang (flag hang try points replace zone try points gained during previous tries in the same round):
        - 1st Try = 12 Try Points
        - 2nd Try = 11 Try Points
        - 3rd Try = 10 Try Points
    - In case of a flag hang, a Bonus Try is played, a 1v1 matchup, in which the attacking team can earn 2 try points by hanging the flag on the opposing breakout wall within 30 seconds. The competing players in the Bonus Try must be chosen from the team roster.
    - Penalties awarded to either player in the Bonus Try count toward the total, like penalties in 'regular' tries.
- Bonus tries will not decrease penalties from players.
- In case of a draw, each team will select 5 players from their roster. Players with penalties are not allowed to be chosen. The first player on that list will play against the opposing player (in order) for two 1v1 matches (following the Bonus Try rules as explained above). Each player has to attack and defend once. After the first pair of players is finished and no team has a lead, the second ones will play their two games (attacking and defending). If there isn't a winner after the 2nd & 3rd round, the 4th pair of players will have to play. If there is no winner after the 5th pair of players played, the sequence will repeat, starting with the first players on the list and so on, until there is a winner.
  For a flag hang a team will receive an 'advantage'. The team that ends up defending the advantage after each two players played will receive +1 point in their game to solve the draw.
  If a team cannot put 5 players on the list, for example, due to penalties, all empty spots will be automatically won by the opposing team.
  If a player picks up a penalty during the overtime matches, the number of tries he needs to sit out will be automatically won by the other team.

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6.2 Standings and Seeding points - Tiebreakers

- Group standings will be determined in the following order of importance: amount of wins > highest point difference > most points scored > most flag hangs > most snatches.
- Seeding points standings will be determined in the following order of importance: amount of seeding points > highest win percentage covering all played games in tournament series (calculated with one decimal place, eg. 50.4%) > total amount of won games in tournament series > highest point difference from all matches in tournament series > total amount of points scored in tournament series > total amount of hangs in tournament series > total amount of snatches in tournament series
- Seeding points given:
  - 1st place — 200 SP
  - 2nd place — 150 SP
  - 3rd place — 100 SP
  - 4th place — 75 SP
  - 5th place — 50 SP
  - 6th place — 45 SP
  - 7th place — 40 SP
  - 8th place — 35 SP
  - 9th place — 30 SP
  - 10th place — 25 SP
  - 11th place — 20 SP
  - 12th place — 15 SP

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6.3 Penalties

If a player commits a foul, penalties can be given by the head referee or host. These penalties are categorized into four degrees: Major penalties, 1st degree penalties, 2nd degree penalties and administrative penalties.

Players with active penalties no longer need to serve their penalty in the box.

The penalty system mostly affects twofold: firstly, the player who committed the foul gets punished. Secondly, that player's team also gets a penalty.

2nd, 1st and Major penalties applied on a player will be counted (stacking). When the third penalty for that player is accrued, the player cannot play for the remainder of the match and the next match. The penalty degrees do not affect the counting for the stacking.
Multiple penalties for a team on different players will all be served at the same time. If a team cannot afford sending at least one player out, the round will be automatically won by the opposing team, as well as subsequent rounds if necessary, until there is at least one player allowed to play. If a player receives more than 1 penalty at once, the player and the team have to serve the penalties after each other, always starting with the highest-degree one. Administrative penalties are only team penalties where it is irrelevant which player committed the foul.
If a player receives a major penalty which leads to a stacked penalty, the player has to serve the major first. After that penalty is cleared, the stacked penalty is served, leading to the player missing two subsequent games after receiving the penalty.
If a penalty is applied to a player outside of an ongoing match, the player's weapon class will always be judged as a rifle, to avoid any room for abuse.

The following table lists the penalty categories and their respective consequences for players and teams:

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Penalty	Player	Team	Stacking
Administrative	-	Have to start the next three tries with one player less.	-
2nd degree	Not allowed to play for the next try.	Have to start the next try with one player less.	yes
1st degree	Not allowed to play for the next three tries.	Have to start the next three tries with two players less.	yes
Major	Not allowed to finish the current match and suspended from the next match.	Have to start with 2 players less for the next 6 tries	yes

Major Penalties

- Headshot No-call: the player that does not call a direct headshot, confirmed by refs beyond reasonable doubt, gets a Major penalty. BBs hitting hair or the loose straps of a headband will be treated as a regular no-call.
- Hot Gun after a game: if a player is tested with a chrono after the official chrono before a match starts at any time during the game, and is shooting over the Joule limit (hot) it results in the player getting a major penalty. A hot gun before a game means the player has to replace the gun within the time and gun restrictions. A tolerance of 1.11—1.20 Joules is permitted and results in a 1st degree instead of a Major penalty.
- Major equipment violation: shooting full auto, burst, ramping, binary.
- Unsportsmanlike behavior: aggressive behavior or attitude to referees, staff, players or spectators, when a player shoots an unnecessarily large amount of BB's towards an opponent who is clearly already out or on their way out with the intention to hurt the other player.

Unsportsmanlike behavior can be also classified as a 1st degree, depending on the circumstances of the aggression.

1st Degree Penalties

- No-call: when a player does not call their hit, determined by the referees, the first-degree severity is based on the totality of the circumstances (i.e. location of the hit, player position, game situation, etc.).

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- Minor equipment violation: eg. using a flashlight, or using a magazine over capacity limits.
- Dead Player Communication: any communication from players not alive and active in the game. This includes any communication, both verbal and physical by eliminated players, from the moment they are hit.
- Blind fire: firing whilst having the barrel of your replica above your eye line; Firing at a spot from where it is not possible to hit your head; Looking away from the spot where you are shooting; Holding your gun top rail below shoulders; Holding your gun outside the lines of your ears.
- Field disruption: when a player significantly moves barriers (intentionally or unintentionally), climbs/stands on/jumps on and over barriers that are not allowed to be jumped over, or jumps over a barrier in a way that is not allowed. Shoots through gaps in bunkers that are not intended to be there.
- Referee Influencing: player(s) suggesting referees to an opponent foul; Players cannot communicate to refs during a match.
- Leaving unnecessarily (during game): when a player leaves the field without being hit, in order to force the buzzer (see also: Intentional self-callout (suicide)).

2nd Degree Penalties

- Slow walk: when a player does not leave the field immediately after being hit, or takes an unnecessarily long route or detour. It is mandatory to run and not to walk. This includes an eliminated player gathering any equipment or mags left on the field during a live game.
- Middle exit: when a player leaves the field through the middle exit. Leaving the field during games can only be done through the nearest back exit.
- Leaving unnecessarily (pre or post-game): when a player leaves the field before or directly after a game (before next teams are called), potentially causing delays or disrupting the flow of the gameplay.
- Breakout fouls:
    - False Start: early breakout, feet/weapons not touching the wall on time, etc.
- Unauthorized unboxing: leaving the penalty box without permission of the referees
- Discussing referee calls: players are not allowed to start a discussion with a referee. Only team captains are allowed to speak to the referee in case of doubting a referee call.
- Cold gun after a game: when the replica shoots below the minimum joule limit after a game. A cold gun before a game means the player has to replace the gun within the time and gun restrictions.
- No-call: When a player does not call their hit, determined by the referees, the second-degree severity is based on the totality of the circumstances (i.e. location of the hit, player position, game situation, etc.).

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- Gun drop: when a player drops their gun in either breakout area, either intentionally or unintentionally, and leaves it there, posing a tripping hazard to (an) other player(s) running towards the wall in order to score points.
- Flag throw: when a player throws or moves the flag in a way that is not allowed.

Administrative Penalties:

- Early buzzer: sounding the buzzer whilst having one or more players alive on the field.
- Late flag drop: when a player does not drop the flag immediately after being hit, or within the determined radius of 1m.
- Taking the flag off the field: when an attacking player takes the flag off the field while leaving, either intentionally or unintentionally, preventing the defending team from scoring a snatch.
- Intentional self-callout (suicide): calling a hit without actually being hit by a direct BB in order to force the buzzer, in an effort to deny the opposing team a chance of scoring or snatching.
- Intentional teamkill trades: synchronizing teamkill trades in order to force the buzzer, in an effort to deny the opposing team a chance of scoring or snatching.
- Teamkills in order to lower the player count: 15 seconds after a teamkill, every buzzer press will be considered game altering, even if the teamkill was unintentional.
- Breakout fouls:
    - A player appearing at the breakout that has an active penalty
    - Starting with more players than is allowed for that given try, this includes having a player in the penalty box that shouldn't be in there, playing with 5 when you must play with 4, or playing with 6 or more when the team should be playing with 5.
    - One or more players using the wrong weapon class setup.
- Off-field Communication: any communication from team/players not in the game.

The administrative penalty is the only penalty not requiring a player to be in the penalty box. The penalty needs to be served by playing with one player less than the team would have normally started with (taking into account any active penalties).

6.4 Game-altering play

Fouls can be viewed as "game-altering play". This is always applied when the fair chance of accomplishing the game's goal is denied by a player or a team while committing a foul.

Once a foul (of any degree) is classed by the refs as game-altering, an instant snatch or flag hang is awarded to the other team. When this is the case, points are awarded as listed in 6.1

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and in accordance with the points for the attacking try (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) that was played, AND the bonus points for the 1v1 that is automatically counted as a win).

Any foul can be classed as game-altering, judged per individual case. The following examples are always game-altering plays:

- Taking the flag off the field
- Early buzzer
- Intentional self-callout (suicide)
- Intentional teamkill trades
- Off-field Communication
- Breakout fouls (administrative)
- Any penalty in the last 30 seconds of a match

When a penalty is classified as game-altering, the remaining match time will be set to the time that was remaining when the foul was made (if and when a pull was made is irrelevant).

Fake Snatch or Hang: if a player fakes a Snatch or a Hang, triggering the host to stop the game, this will be considered game-altering, provided the opposing team has at least one player alive once the game ends.

6.5 Penalties in the last 30 seconds of a match

- If a player receives a penalty in the last 30 seconds of a match, it will by definition be seen as a significantly game-altering play.
- If on each side a penalty is applied within the last 30 seconds of a match, the one that was committed the first will be enforced.
- The time will be set to 30 seconds and there won't be an option to buzzer. If the round ends before the time is up and is stopped by the host, the match will end, even if there is remaining time on the clock.
- The preceding rule protects the integrity of the sport. It is meant to be in favor of the team that doesn't commit a foul in the last 30 seconds and to eliminate the option to gain an unfair advantage by committing a foul to hinder the other team from achieving their game goal.

6.6 Disqualifications

Players and teams can get disqualified for:

- Aggressive behavior towards referees.

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- Aggressive behavior towards players.
- Arguing with Referees during games.
- Equipment Violation: when a player uses non-regulation equipment such as double trigger, shoots over joule limit, altered FCUs to burst fire, etc (results in a direct DQ).

6.7 Enforcement

If a player is pulled by a referee, they have to go to the penalty box and wait there until the referee comes to explain said penalty.

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7 Eliminations

7.1 Definitions of eliminations

- Any bodily contact with a BB is considered a hit, unless in cases explicitly excepted. This includes any part of bodily gear (such as trousers, beanies, t-shirts, belts, HPA tanks, GoPro mounts, etc.).
- Replica hits count as hits. This includes everything that is attached to the replica. Any direct hit on equipment that is in contact with your body is considered part of your body.
- A direct BB impact on the flag while carrying counts as a player hit.
- If opposing players shoot each other at the same time, both players are hit ("trade").
- Dry fires do not count as a hit.
- Ricochets do not count as a hit.
- Friendly fire counts as a hit.
- No minimum engagement distance.
- No verbal hits ("bang-bang", "surrender").
- No melee kills.

7.2 Player calling hits

- When a player is hit, that player must rush off the field towards the nearest back exit as quickly as possible. It is not allowed to exit the field through the middle doors.
- Players cannot verbally declare "Hit!" or any other verbal communication to signal their elimination. This is to prevent dead players from communicating with their team after being hit.
- When a player is hit while carrying the flag, the flag must be dropped immediately within a 1m (≈3 ft) radius of where the player was hit, before exiting the field.
- If the flag lands in a different zone from where the player was while getting shot, a ref may reposition the flag. In all such cases, zone points will reflect the location where the player got hit, even if the flag was not repositioned physically by a ref. A repositioning of the flag will always be in favor of the defending team, ensuring no advantage can be gained.

7.3 Referee calling hits

- Field referees have the primary task of watching players for hits, without being intrusive to the game. Refs will attempt to stay out of the way as much as possible.
- Each field referee is assigned an area of the field and the players that enter that zone.

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- Referees may only call hits for a player if they visually confirm the BB made contact with the player. Even if the engagement distance is very short, a visual confirmation of the BB bouncing off the player must be confirmed for a ref to call a hit and pull said player.
- Refs must be familiar with dry fires and ricochets, and how to distinguish them from direct hits.
- When a referee pulls a player out of the game, the player has to go to the penalty box immediately.
- Field refs are encouraged to consult each other for multiple confirmations/POVs after the round ends if needed.
- Field refs must communicate fouls to the head ref, using the player's identification (see 3.3) as main reference where possible.
- Any questions that field refs may have must be brought to the Head Ref for any decisions needed or rulings on the fly.

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8 Equipment

8.1 Replicas

- There are two weapon classes: Rifle and Pistol. Each gun is only allowed to have one inner barrel.
- Each player can only carry one gun (no backups are allowed).
- Teams are allowed to have a maximum of 3 rifles at any time on the field. Players with an active personal penalty count as "on the field" in that regard.
- The player who gets pulled by a ref and serves his active penalty has to do so with the same gun class they were carrying at the moment of the ref call.
- Rifles need to have a proper stock in order to count as a rifle, pistols should feature blowback in order to count as a pistol and are not allowed to have a stock. Magazine adapters moving the magazine in front of the trigger are not allowed.
- FPS/Joules = minimum 0.9 Joules, maximum 1.1 Joules using 0.25 gram tracer BB's. Actual limits may be different due to local legislation or location policies.
- Players are responsible for their own chronos and will randomly be checked during the tournament.
- All replicas must have a trigger guard.
- Double/extended triggers are not allowed.
- No ramping, burst, binary or any advantageous programming of FCU.
- Flashlights are not allowed.

8.2 BB's and tracer units

- Tracers and tracer BB's are mandatory; they will be checked at the start of each match by the referees. In the case a tracer is not working, the player is not allowed to play the match. The team has to play this match one player short.
- 0.25g green tracers are the only BB's that are allowed.
- All BB's a player brings to the field must adhere to the local legislation, where applicable.
- Tracers are not allowed to have lights in the front activated (eg. Acetech Bifrost, etc.)
- If a tracer stops working during a round the player is allowed to continue playing the ongoing round.

8.3 Magazines

Rifles: Mid Caps Only (200 rounds max. per mag).
Pistols: Extended Mags and Mag Adapters OK (200-round max. mid caps only).
No limit on the total number of magazines/shells.

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8.4 Firing mode

- Semi-auto only: one trigger pull = one shot
- Feathering is not allowed, the thumb must stay around the grip.
- Replicas may only shoot 1 BB for every back and forward motion of the trigger.
- Replicas may only shoot 1 BB for every back and forward motion of the finger. Manual binary is not allowed (pushing the trigger forward or sideways).
- Replicas are not allowed to shoot without the touch of the trigger.
- Replicas with triggers adjusted in a way that a touch, wiggle, or hold of the trigger causes multiple shots being released at once (switch bounce), can be disallowed by refs at any given time. The ref doesn't need to be able to replicate the process. It is the players' responsibility to not exploit unintended technical misfunctions of FCUs and/or trigger boards (switch bounce).
- Double-finger shooting is not allowed.
- Blind fire (firing without looking where you're aiming) is not allowed. Players have to be able to see their opponent while firing. The barrel must be under eye level at all times. The barrel must be within a near range to the eyes (proper aim).

8.5 Goggle/Face mask

- All players must be equipped with full frontal face protection, using a goggle system or face mask manufactured for airsoft or paintball.
- Goggles must be worn at all times in the arena, chrono area, and test firing ranges.
- Masks must be worn by all people in the playing area, with no exceptions.

8.6 Clothing

- All teams must be wearing the same theme/colorway/uniform/jerseys to be easily recognizable for refs and spectators.
- The clothing of a player must display their player number. This may be on a mask, or jersey, see 3.3.
- A player cannot wear padding (bounce shirts, jersey padding, or hoodies).
- A player is allowed to have elbow, knee, and slide protection.
- White or light gray as a base color is not allowed on jerseys or pants.
- Backpacks of any kind are not allowed.

8.7 Prohibited equipment

- No ramping, burst, binary, or any advantageous programming of FCU.
- No double triggers or binary triggers.
- No grenade launchers/attachments.
- No riot shields.

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- No melee weapons.
- No thunderbees/tornados/grenades.
- No hand-held flashlights.
- No stationary strobe lights.

9 3-vs.-3 Rule adjustment

For 3-vs.-3 tournaments, all of the NSL rules & regulations apply, with the following exceptions and adaptations:

- A maximum of 3 players per team can play in a round.
- A team's roster can consist of a maximum of 6 players.
- A team can split up into multiple 3-player teams.
- Switching teams during a tournament is not allowed, each 'split' team is treated as a unique team.
- A maximum of 2 rifles per team is allowed on the field at the same time.
- The game duration is 5 minutes, and finals have a duration of 7 minutes.
- The buzzer activation time is adjusted to 18 seconds.
- 1st-degree penalties mean only the player receiving the penalty needs to sit out for 3 tries. He cannot return during the remainder of the ongoing match. After three tries he can be replaced by any other, penalty-free, player.
- In case of a draw, a team can allocate 3 players for the overtime shootout, instead of the 5 stipulated in 6.1.

10 Pulse

Pulse tournaments follow a separate ruleset.

11 Filming and photography

11.1 Consent waiver

- All participants in NSL must sign a document proving their consent to be filmed, photographed, and live-streamed for commercial use.
- Minors must have a parent or guardian sign on their behalf.
- It is an NSL partner's responsibility to include this waiver in their respective language in their registration process for each registered player.

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11.2 Content sharing

- Video content from NSL events must be captured by NSL partners.
- The content will be used for localized and global marketing purposes.
- This content is inclusive of, but not limited to event live streams.
- Content sharing process will vary on a case-by-case basis, to be determined with each partner.

11.3 Filming by players

- Action cams are not allowed.
- Filming from the sidelines/spectator areas is not allowed.
- Professional videography/photography is only allowed by approved individuals, with approval determined on a case-by-case basis.

11.4 3rd party filming and photography

- All 3rd parties must obtain permission/authorization for filming/photography at NSL events.
- This includes businesses and individuals/spectators.
- Commercial use of content captured at NSL events is limited to NSL, the event host/partner, and authorized 3rd parties approved by NSL.

Appendix A - NSL Layout

For a 3D interactive model of the current layout, please visit https://nsl-sports.com/layout/, or scan the QR code to go there directly:

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