

SECTION 1: FOOTBALL SPORT SPECIFICATION

1. Rules of Competition

The Virtus Football events will be governed by Virtus which are based on the rules of FIFA.

2. Virtus Sport Rules

The Virtus Football programme is 11 a-side.

3. Rankings

The rules of Football pertaining to rankings will be based on those of FIFA.

SECTION 2: VIRTUS CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT SPECIFICATION

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1 Event Specification

1.1 Event Title

The title of the event is the “[Number or Year] Virtus [World/Regional] Football Championships”, for example “5th Virtus World Football Championships” or “2013 Virtus European Football Championships”.

1.2 Event Date

Virtus Football World and Regional Championships will be held every four years in line with the below programme.

	Virtus Football	Virtus Futsal
Year 1		World Championships
Year 2	World Championships	Regional Championships
Year 3		Global Games
Year 4	Regional Championships	Regional Championships

The specific event date should be determined in consultation with the Sport Director and Virtus Football Committee and should allow for competition cycles, climate, other major events, venue and accommodation availability.

1.3 Rules

Virtus Football events are organised in accordance with the Virtus Football rules as set out in the Sport Specification. Local Organisers are not permitted to amend these rules.

1.4 International Federation Sanctioning

At present there is no need for Virtus Football Championships to be sanctioned by FIFA however the involvement of the National Football Federation is essential to ensure a successful event.

1.5 Inspection Visit

The LOC will be supported by the Virtus Sport Director and Football Committee who will give advice and guidance throughout the planning and delivery processes. Further support will be given by Virtus as required.

The Sport Director or a member of the Football Committee will undertake a one or two-day inspection visit 6-12 months prior to the event which will include a visit to the competition and training venue(s), accommodation and time will also be available for competition related discussions.

The LOC will be responsible for all costs relating to the visit including travel, accommodation and catering costs.

1.6 Event Timetable

1.6.1 Virtus World Championships

Virtus World Championships will be played over no more than 14 days which will include training, acclimatisation and travel arrangements.

The LOC should liaise with the Virtus Sport Director and Football Committee regarding the schedule and programme.

No teams are permitted to play on consecutive days.

1.6.2 Regional Championships

The length of Regional Championships will be arranged according to the number of teams entering the event.

No teams are permitted to play on consecutive days.

2 Competition Information

2.1 Qualification Criteria

2.1.1 World Championships

There will be a maximum of 8 teams. This includes the Host Nation, plus up to 7 teams based on World ranking position.

2.1.2 World Challenge Cup

There will be between 4 and 8 teams who are not qualified to take part in the World Championships. The World Challenge Cup will take place at the same time and place as the World Championships. These teams can accumulate World ranking points.

2.1.3 Regional Championship

Where possible Regions should support an open entry system up to 12 teams.

2.2 Competition Format

All Virtus World Championships will consist of two stages of competition – group followed by knockout.

2.2.1 Group Stage

Placing in each group will be decided by following procedure;

- A. Greatest number of points attained
- B. Goal difference
- C. Greatest number of goals scored
- D. Results of the matches between two tied teams

If two (2) teams are equal on the basis of the above criteria having played each other in the final Group game, their ranking shall be determined as follows –

- E. Kicks from the penalty mark

If two teams are equal on the basis of criteria A - D and have not played each other in the final match, their ranking shall be as follows –

- F. Discipline record of tied teams
- G. Drawing of lots

2.2.2 Knockout Stages

Knockout competition should be provided for all teams to decide rankings across all placings.

Where the match drawn after normal time, extra time shall be played (2 periods of 15 minutes each) and followed, if necessary, by kicks from the penalty mark to determine the winner.

2.2.3 World Championships

8 teams will be divided into 2 groups (4 teams in each group) with each group playing a round robin format.

1st to 8th Place

Top 2 teams of each group enter the knockout stages to decide ranking from 1st to 4th place. The 3rd and 4th place teams of each group will playoff for 5th to 8th place in a separate competition.

Semi Finals will be as follows:

- SF1: 1 Group A v 2nd Group B
- SF2: 2nd Group A v 1st Group B

3rd/4th Place Playoff – the losing teams from the Semi Finals will playoff for 3rd and 4th place

Final – the winning teams from the Semi Finals will playoff for 1st and 2nd place

5th to 8th Place play offs

The following format will take place:

- 3rd place in Group A v 4th Place in Group B (1)
- 3rd place in Group B v 4th place in Group A (2)
- Loser (1) v Loser (2)
- Winner (1) v Winner (2)

2.2.4 World Challenge Cup

The World Challenge Cup will follow a similar format to the World Championship.

2.3 Competition Schedule

The LOC should liaise with the Sport Director regarding the detailed competition schedule.

2.4 Entry Quotas

Virtus National Member Organisations can only enter one team.

2.5 Event Viability Criteria

A minimum of 4 teams are required for a World Championship, World Challenge Cup or Regional Championship.

2.6 Medals

2.6.1 World Championships Medals & Awards

The team winning the Championships will be awarded the World Cup trophy and 25 Gold medals (Players/Staff)

The team finishing in 2nd place will receive 25 Silver medals (Players/Staff)

The team finishing in 3rd place will receive 25 Bronze medals (Players/Staff)

The Top Scorer (Group Stage and Knock-out rounds) will receive a Golden Boot

The Top Goalkeeper will receive an Award

An Award will be given to the Player of the Championship

A Fair Play / Respect trophy will be presented to one Country

2.6.2 World Challenge Cup Medals and Awards

The team winning the Challenge Cup will be awarded the Challenge Cup trophy and 25 Gold medals (Players/Staff)

The team finishing in 2nd place will receive 25 Silver medals (Players/Staff)

The team finishing in 3rd place will receive 25 Bronze medals (Players/Staff)

The Top Scorer (Group Stage and Knock-out rounds) will receive a Golden Boot

The Top Goalkeeper will receive an Award

An Award will be given to the Player of the Championship

A Fair Play / Respect trophy will be presented to one Country

2.7 Entry Process

Preliminary entry information should be available 12 months before the date of the Opening Ceremony and final entry information 9 months before, giving full details and costs associated with the event.

All entries will be managed via the Virtus Sports Management system. The LOC will be given access to the system to manage entries and information.

A full list of entrants should be available in excel format for key partner agencies within 2 weeks of the final entry deadline.

2.8 Entry Fees

Fees to participants may be charged, however it should be remembered that many athletes will find it difficult to raise funds and therefore the cost of the event should be considered carefully.

Sponsorship may be raised, in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Virtus Handbook.

An accreditation fee (level to be determined by Virtus) must be added to the cost of the event and may not be used to cover the cost of the event.

Virtus may charge a small online entry fee to cover administration costs of the Virtus Sports Management System which will be agreed with the LOC and included in the entry fee.

Entry fees will normally be made in 2 separate payments:

- 30% at first entry deadline, payable to LOC and will be held as a non returnable deposit by the organisers;
- 70% at final entry deadline, payable to the LOC.

Virtus advises all LOC's to establish a clear cancellation policy and to publish this within the entry pack.

The first entry fee forms a legal and binding agreement to enter the event.

2.9 Seeding

World Championship seeding will be allocated according to previous results and rankings by the Virtus Football Committee.

2.10 Competition Draw

The competition draw will be made prior to the event in conjunction with the Virtus Sport Director.

2.11 Technical Meeting

The Technical Meeting will take place the day prior to competition to discuss all important details concerning the competition and organisation. It is **COMPULSORY** for each participating nation to attend. Each nation can send up to two persons to the meeting.

2.12 Team Composition & Delegations

Each team can comprise a maximum of 18 athletes.

Each team may in addition bring 7 team officials.

Each player should be allocated a player number which he must retain throughout the competition.

The number 1 (one) shall be allocated to one of the goalkeepers.

The complete player list and numbers for each Country should be submitted to the Games Director prior to the commencement of the Championships, with a copy to the Virtus Sport Director.

A maximum of 7 named substitutes and 7 Team Staff will be allowed on the bench in the Technical Area.

Only 1 (one) Staff Member can STAND in the Technical Area at any one time throughout the duration of the game. All others MUST be seated.

Teams will be permitted to use 3 (three) named Substitutes during the game, and 1 (one) additional substitute where the game goes to extra time.

2.13 Athlete Sport Equipment and Clothing Regulations

All sport equipment and clothing must abide by Virtus regulations. Players must wear shirt, shorts, socks, shin protection and footwear. Clothing should consist of no more than four colours (excluding any colours in emblems etc) and should include:

- the player number on the back (centred) of any shirt and on the front of any shorts
- the national badge (max 100cm²)

The emblem/logo of the Virtus Member Organisation may appear in its entirety only once and only shirt sleeve. This must not exceed 12cm².

Players' names may appear on the back of the shirt

The shirt may also contain a sponsor logo of no more than 12cm² to be placed ONLY on the sleeve. All teams should carry additional shirts/shorts in case players are required by the referee to change because of damage or blood caused through an injury.

Throughout the competition the first named team will be regarded as the Home team and will have the choice of kit, unless by mutual agreement a change is agreed.

Team members must not reveal undershirts which contain slogans or advertising. The basic compulsory equipment must not contain any political, religious or personal statements.

All items of jewellery (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather, rubber bands etc.) are strictly forbidden and must be removed. Using tape to cover jewellery is not acceptable.

Modern protective equipment such as headgear, facemasks and knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight padded material are not considered dangerous and are therefore permitted.

If a player loses his footwear accidentally and immediately plays the ball and/or scores a goal, there is no infringement and the goal is awarded because he lost his footwear by accident.

2.14 Protests and Appeals

An Appeals Committee will be established at the Technical Meeting.

Protests shall be submitted in writing to the LOC Match Coordinator within two hours of the end of the match and followed up immediately by sending a written report, including a copy of the original protest to the Technical Committee Chair.

Protests regarding the eligibility of players for any match shall be submitted in writing to the Technical Director/Delegate no later than 24 hours prior to the kick-off in the 1st Match of the tournament.

Protests regarding the pitch and its surroundings, marking, goals or football shall be made in writing to the Referee before the start of the match by the Head of Delegation of the team leading the protest.

Protests must be accompanied by a deposit of \$100 (or local equivalent) which is returned if the protest is upheld.

Adherence to specified deadlines for protests will be maintained, otherwise protests will be disregarded.

Appeals against a decision of the Technical Director/Delegate must be lodged with the Head of LOC within 24 hours of the original decision in writing and in English giving the reasons for the appeal with a deposit of \$100 (or local equivalent) which is returned if the Appeal is upheld

For avoidance of doubt an appeal cannot be made against a Referees decision on the field of play.

2.15 Discipline and Sanctions

Within a Virtus Championships the following rules shall apply with regards discipline and resulting sanctions.

A player who is sent from the field of play is sanctioned in accordance with the standard match suspension tariff outlined below.

- Receiving a second “yellow card” in the same match – 1 (one) match suspension
- Denying a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity - 1 (one) match suspension
- Use of offensive, insulting or abusive gestures - 2 (two) match suspension
- Attempting to kick or strike another player - 3 (three) match suspension

Any action deemed to be Serious Foul Play (as below) will incur permanent exclusion from the tournament:

- Kicking or striking another player
- Use of offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures directed at match officials
- Spitting
- Head butting
- Assault (including biting)
- Refusing to leave the field of play when ordered
- Causing a match to be abandoned
- Any offence where the offender has also acted in a discriminatory manner for reasons of ethnic origin, colour, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability

Any player receiving a yellow card in two (2) separate games in either the Group Stages and/or Knock-out /Ranking rounds will serve a one (1) match suspension for the next game.

A Team Official who receives a red card during a game will be banned from the touchline / Technical Area for the remainder of the competition and further sanctioned as the Technical Committee decide.

2.16 Communication

A Team Handbook must be developed and published approximately 3 months before the event containing all key event information.

During competition, an effective communication system should be installed to ensure teams receive accurate and timely information.

All information relating to the event (including printed and electronic formats) must be presented in English. Where possible, information should be available in additional languages.

2.17 Results

An efficient and accurate results management service is essential throughout the event. Organisers should ensure that results of events are published ‘live’ to the event website.

By the close of the event, a full results list should be available.

A full copy of results should be sent to the Virtus Head office (in pdf format) immediately upon conclusion of the event.

3 Eligibility & Classification

3.1 Eligibility

All national teams shall be eligible to participate, provided that their Member Organisation is in good standing with Virtus, and the entry is sanctioned by the National Member Organisation.

Virtus will manage the primary eligibility process and will regularly update the Virtus Master List. All athletes entering the event must appear as 'Active' on the Virtus Master List no later than the final entry deadline. Applications for new athletes must be submitted to Virtus at least 12 weeks before the start date of the competition.

Athletes who do not meet the qualifying criteria or do not appear on the Virtus Master List as 'Active' are not eligible for this event.

There is no 'guest' entry.

The LOC will be responsible for ensuring all athletes are eligible to compete. This includes:

- Appearance on the Virtus Master List no later than the final entry deadline (all athletes)
- All sports rules and regulations regarding minimum age, nationality etc (all athletes)

4 Venue

4.1 Facilities

4.1.1 For Virtus World Football Championships up to 4 pitches are required for competition depending on the surface and agreed schedule. All pitches must be FIFA standard and approved by the host country's National Governing Body of Football.

4.1.2 The organisers must supply the following equipment/facilities for use in competition:

- 10 balls per team for training (FIFA approved)
- 10 match balls (FIFA approved)
- PA system
- All other technical pitch equipment as per FIFA regulations such as goals, lines and flags
- Capacity to accommodate some seated spectators

4.1.3 The following spaces should be provided for athletes and team officials

- 4 team changing rooms
- Athlete Lounge / rest area
- Reserved seating area

4.1.4 The following spaces should be provided for officials

- Male and female changing rooms
- Lounge/rest area
- Reserved seating area

4.1.5 The following spaces should be provided to run the competition

Competition management office including space for Sport Director and Head of Referees to work (with internet connection)

4.1.6 Venues should be chosen that are no higher than 2000m in altitude.

4.2 Training Facilities

4.2.1 Training facilities must be available prior to and during championships. 2 pitches must be made available where training slots are available throughout the day. Where training slots are only available for half a day 4 pitches must be provided.

Please note this is dependent on the pitch surface which must be able to withstand the volume of training and competition and possible inclement weather. Where conditions dictate either 3G or 4G pitches could be used, with written permission from the Sport Director.

4.2.2 On competition days training must be provided for teams not competing that day.

5 Officials, Staffing & Volunteers

5.1 Technical Delegate

The Virtus Sport Director or a representative of the Virtus Football Committee will attend the event in the role of Technical Delegate for the event. The Technical Delegate is the highest authority with regards to technical matters within each sport.

The LOC is responsible for meeting the cost of travel (ie. flights), accommodation and transport of the Virtus Technical Delegate or their nominated representative.

5.2 VIRTUS Official Representative

Virtus will normally appoint an Official Representative - a member of the Governing Board - to the event.

The LOC is responsible for meeting the cost of travel (ie. flights), accommodation and transport of the Official Representative.

The Official Representative will take final decisions on all matters except those that are of a sports technical nature (and in so far not put before the Accreditation Committee) as much as possible in consultation with the technical delegate, the organising committee and team leaders. They shall also chair the Accreditation Committee and take a prime role in all protocol matters.

5.3 Virtus Sports Manager

The Virtus Sports Manager will normally attend World Championship events.

The LOC is responsible for meeting the cost of travel (ie. flights), accommodation and transport of the Virtus Sports Manager or their nominated representative.

The Sports Manager will be present at the event to support the Technical Director, Sport Director, Officials Representative and LOC where required and liaise with the teams and officials to support growth and development of the sport.

5.4 Technical Officials

The following International and National Technical Officials must be appointed to the event:

	Number	Qualification	Appointed By
Referee Coordinator	1	Experienced Referee	National Federation
International Referees	Up to 4	International	To be identified from the Virtus International Referee list
Referees	Dependant on number of teams/matches	Minimum National	National Federation

The Referee Coordinator must arrive two days prior to competition to inspect the facilities and work with the Organisers and Sport Director to finalise the competition schedule and Referee schedule.

All other officials must arrive at least the day prior to competition to be briefed by the Sport Director and Referee Coordinator and familiarise themselves with the facilities.

The LOC is responsible for meeting the cost of travel (ie. flights), accommodation and transport.

5.5 Sport Specific Volunteers

The LOC should make arrangements for the following sport specific volunteers:

- Team Liaisons (one per team)
- Technical Officials Liaison
- Ball boys/girls

6 Medical & Anti Doping

6.1 Medical

First aid and physiotherapy services must be made available for training and competition by the Organisers.

In addition an ambulance should be onsite during competition.

6.2 Doping Control

The Virtus Championships are subject to doping control testing. Appropriate facilities must be provided by the LOC in accordance with Virtus Anti-Doping Policy.

The number of tests and the Test Distribution Plan (TDP) will be set by the Virtus Anti-Doping Committee.

Any athlete requiring a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) has to send an TUE applications to the Virtus Anti-Doping Committee NO LESS THAN 30 DAYS BEFORE COMPETITION to tue@virtus.sport

7 Event Operations

7.1 Accreditation

An accreditation system should be developed for all athletes, team staff, event staff, volunteers, officials, guests, media and other persons involved in the event. This must carry the persons photograph and details of their level of access.

An efficient system of presenting accreditation on arrival should be arranged.

7.2 Visas

Each competing nation is responsible for arranging for the necessary visas for their delegation. Where required the LOC will issue a letter of invitation to participating nations.

The LOC is responsible for applying and paying for the necessary visas for all appointed technical officials. They must ensure that applications are submitted by any deadline set by the diplomatic/consular authorities of the country to be visited.

7.3 Transportation

7.3.1 Athletes/Team Officials – All competing nations are responsible for the booking and cost of travel to the designated port of entry for the event. The LOC must provide transport to and from the designated port of entry and the accommodation, training and competition venues.

Teams can travel in shared transport to and from training but for competition must be provided with their own bus. A bus schedule should be provided allowing teams to travel to and from matches in plenty of time. In addition flexibility should be planned to allow for teams not competing to spectate.

7.3.2 Technical Officials – The Referee Coordinator will be on site for the duration of competition. The officials transport schedule must guarantee that all other officials arrive on venue a minimum 1 hour before the start of their respective match(es).

7.4 Accommodation

It is normal for different standards of accommodation to be offered, however all accommodation should be of an appropriate standard and due care should be given to athlete welfare and protection issues.

Accommodation for athletes, officials, volunteers and guests should be in the same general area but any media guests should be accommodated separately.

Accommodation should be located close to the arrival airport (ideally no more than 90 minutes in average traffic conditions) and include a number of accessible rooms.

Accommodation should be close to competition venues (no more than 60 minutes at peak traffic times) and include a number of accessible rooms.

7.5 Catering & refreshments

LOC's should provide all meals throughout the event including breakfast, lunch and evening meals ensuring religious/ethnic requirements and the nutritional requirements of athletes are observed.

Sufficient bottled water should be available at all training and competition venues throughout the event.

7.6 Security

The LOC are responsible for ensuring security measures to guarantee the safe and peaceful delivery of the event. The LOC should undertake a risk assessment in consultation with the relevant national and local authorities.

8 Ceremonies, Guests & Social Programme

8.1 Ceremonies and Receptions

Ceremonies are an opportunity to welcome delegations and guests, to showcase national culture and to launch or close the event in a positive spirit and atmosphere. It is mandatory to include an opportunity to raise/lower the Virtus flag and a welcome speech from the Virtus President.

Careful consideration should be given to athlete welfare regarding the timing, location and length of the ceremony. It should be close to the accommodation venue.

Additional Receptions may be considered for key guests, VIP's and sponsors.

8.2 Guests

Organisers are required to provide a VIP Guest hospitality programme. Organisers are required to ensure an appropriate accommodation venue is available for guests, and if possible, access to transport, competition venues and any social programme.

The guest list should be developed in consultation with the Sport Director.

Guests will normally attend at their own expense.

8.3 Social programme

A social programme may also be offered to participants. However it is important that the programme is sympathetic to the demands on elite athletes.

9 Branding, PR and Media

9.1 Branding and PR

The organisers are responsible for promoting the event in accordance with the branding guidelines set out in the Virtus Handbook.

All venues should be fully branded with the Virtus logo, and all printed materials, website and other marketing materials should ensure the Virtus logo is prominent.

9.2 Event Website

The organisers must create and maintain an event website, containing key information about the event. An event photographer must be arranged together with video footage of competition.

9.3 Media

Press releases should create a positive message regarding the spirit of the event maintain an athlete-centred approach. Copies of all press releases, news items, features, photos, videos and other media should be made available to Virtus upon completion of the event.

LOC's should take advantage of social media opportunities, including Twitter and Facebook to promote the event, Virtus, and sport for athletes with an intellectual disability.

10 Spectators & Ticketing

Event hosts should give careful consideration to how the event will be marketed to spectators, including arrangements for ticketing (whether paid or free tickets), and how spectator safety and enjoyment is carefully managed.

Tickets sales may be managed by the organisers or in conjunction with Virtus. Free tickets might ensure a larger crowd, adding to the atmosphere at events, whilst levying a charge will generate income towards the delivery of the event. In all cases, a ticket-management procedure should be put in place (this can be managed through the Virtus website).

Careful consideration should be given to how spectators will be managed within the venue including crowd safety, seating arrangements, commentary and public announcements, programme sales, access to refreshments and bathroom facilities, insurance, accreditation/access control, emergency planning.

11 Insurance, Finance & Contingency Planning

11.1 Event Hosting Fee

For World Championships an event hosting fee is payable to Virtus within 1 month of the completion of the event. The amount will be confirmed annually by Virtus.

11.2 Liability

The cost of hosting the event will entirely be met by the LOC and losses will not be underwritten by Virtus.

11.3 Insurance

All Team Members are obliged to have their own travel and medical insurance for the duration of the Championships.

The LOC must provide public liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance for the event, and should consider cancellation insurance. Virtus advises all LOC's to establish a clear cancellation policy and to publish this within the entry pack. Please contact Virtus for advice regarding the minimum levels of cover needed.

11.4 Event Proceeds

Any financial surplus resulting from the hosting of the Championships will be distributed 50% to the LOC and 50% to Virtus.

11.5 Emergency Planning

LOC's should develop clear emergency procedures in the event of a major accident or emergency at all accommodation and training venues. This includes protocols for managing the immediate situation, ensuring the support of emergency services, for liaison and coordination with Virtus staff, and for management of media.

The plan should be developed in consultation with Virtus and made available to key staff within the LOC.

11.6 Contingency Planning

Despite the very best planning, there will often be unforeseen circumstances that arise during the planning and delivery of a major event. It is important therefore that LOC's give consideration to contingency and backup plans in respect of essential event areas to ensure successful delivery.

Examples might include:

- Problems regarding venue and facility availability,
- Loss of a key sponsor or income source
- A power failure or loss of internet impeding communication
- Accommodation availability problems
- A key member of staff or volunteer falling ill

12 Post Event

12.1 Post Event Report

On completion of the event, the Organisers will provide a short report detailing an overview of the event and a full statement of income and expenditure.

12.2 Final Results

The Organisers will be responsible for providing the Secretariat with an electronic copy of the event results. This should be done on a daily basis, with a full copy of results on completion of the event.