

U.P.A.F.A.

Uttar Pradesh American Football Association

Coach Certification — L3 — Elite Coach

National / Olympic Pathway — Instructor Guide & Participant Handouts

Total contact time: 32+ hours over a 4-day residential + supervised practicum

Program Manual — Version 1.0 | July 2026

Session Schedule

This guide covers all 9 modules for Coach L3 — Elite Coach, combining an instructor script with printable participant handouts for each module.

1. International Rulebook: IFAF / World Games / LA28 Competition Format	2 hr
2. Advanced Tactical Systems & Opposition Scouting	4 hr
3. Sports Science: Biomechanics, Load Management & Recovery	3 hr
4. High-Performance Leadership & Team Culture	3 hr
5. Data-Driven Performance Analysis	3 hr
6. Mentorship & Coach Development	2 hr
7. Crisis & Conflict Management	2 hr
8. Capstone Project	8 hr + presentation
9. Supervised Practicum	Evaluated live

How to Use This Manual

Each module below contains two parts: an Instructor Guide (learning objectives, a full delivery script, key teaching points, and a structured activity) followed immediately by a Participant Handout page designed to be photocopied and given to each attendee (notes/worksheet items, reflection prompts, and quick-check questions). An Instructor Answer Key for all quick-check questions is provided as an appendix at the end of this manual — it is not intended for participant distribution.

Module 1: International Rulebook: IFAF / World Games / LA28 Competition Format

Duration: 2 hr

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Learning Objectives

- Know the IFAF/LA28 5v5 competition rule variations vs. grassroots rulesets.
- Understand international game format: timing, roster, rusher enforcement, overtime.

Instructor Script

International 5v5 flag football (the format used at the World Games and adopted for LA28) standardizes elements that vary widely at grassroots level: the field is 50 yards plus two 9-yard end zones, games run as two 20-minute halves with a running clock and defined stoppages, rosters carry additional eligible players versus a grassroots squad, and there is a single designated rusher with a strict count enforced by the referee rather than coach-managed.

Teach the differences in scoring conversion options (1-point from close range vs. 2-point from distance) and the overtime procedure, typically an alternating one-play-each format similar to a shootout.

An L3 coach must be fluent enough in the international rulebook to prepare a squad without the ‘translation lag’ of learning international quirks mid-tournament.

Key Teaching Points

- Field/timing differences from grassroots
- Roster rules at international level
- Referee-enforced rusher count
- Scoring conversion options and overtime format

Activity: Rule-Comparison Table

1. Provide a grassroots-vs-international ruleset comparison table.
2. Participants complete it in pairs.
3. Group review of the overtime procedure flowchart.

Participant Handout — Module 1: International Rulebook: IFAF / World Games / LA28 Competition Format

Notes & Worksheet

- ☐ Complete the grassroots-vs-international comparison table.
- ☐ Walk through the overtime procedure flowchart.

Reflection & Application

What's the international rule difference most likely to catch your squad off guard if unprepared?

Quick Check

1. How long is each half in international 5v5 competition?
2. Who enforces the rusher count at international level?

Module 2: Advanced Tactical Systems & Opposition Scouting

Duration: 4 hr

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Learning Objectives

- Build a multi-formation offensive/defensive gameplan.
- Scout an opponent and build a targeted plan.
- Make a structural in-game adjustment.

Instructor Script

At L3, tactics move from teaching a concept to building a system — a full call sheet covering multiple formations, situational plays (short-yardage, two-minute, red-zone-equivalent inside the 9-yard international end zone), and pre-planned counters to common defensive shells.

Teach opposition scouting: identify an opponent's base coverage and rush trigger from available film, their tendency by down-and-distance, and their two or three 'money plays' they lean on in high-leverage situations — then build a specific gameplan (not a generic one) that attacks the identified weaknesses.

Cover in-game adjustment at this level: a genuine halftime adjustment changes structure (a new formation, a new coverage shell), not just play-calling within the same structure.

Key Teaching Points

- Full call-sheet construction
- Situational play sets (short-yardage, two-minute, red zone)
- Opponent scouting method
- Structural halftime adjustment vs. surface-level tweaks

Activity: Scouting Packet Exercise

1. Distribute a scouting packet on a fictional opponent.
2. Groups build a targeted gameplan attacking identified weaknesses.
3. Each group presents their gameplan and rationale.

Participant Handout — Module 2: Advanced Tactical Systems & Opposition Scouting

Notes & Worksheet

- ☐ Build a call sheet using the provided template.
- ☐ Complete the scouting report template for the fictional opponent.

Reflection & Application

What's the difference between a real structural adjustment and simply calling a different play from the same look?

Quick Check

1. What counts as a genuine halftime adjustment at L3?
2. Name two things logged when scouting an opponent.

Module 3: Sports Science: Biomechanics, Load Management & Recovery

Duration: 3 hr

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Learning Objectives

- Apply biomechanics cues for throwing and cutting efficiency.
- Track training load using session-RPE.
- Prescribe basic recovery protocols.

Instructor Script

Cover throwing biomechanics beyond the L1 cue set: hip-shoulder separation (rotating the hips ahead of the throwing shoulder generates power without extra arm strain) and follow-through plane (a flat, driving follow-through improves accuracy over a 'looping' release).

Cover cutting biomechanics: a lower center of mass and a wider base on the plant step reduce non-contact ACL/ankle injury risk versus an upright, narrow-based cut.

Introduce load management using simple session-RPE tracking — multiplying session duration by an athlete's 1–10 exertion rating gives a workload number trackable week to week to flag a dangerous spike. Cover baseline recovery protocol: sleep as the primary recovery tool, active recovery after high-load games, and a return-to-play framework an L3 coach should recognize (though not independently clear athletes medically).

Key Teaching Points

- Hip-shoulder separation in throwing
- Cutting mechanics and injury-risk reduction
- Session-RPE load tracking
- Recovery and return-to-play basics

Activity: Load Calculation Exercise

1. Provide a sample training week with durations and RPE ratings.
2. Participants calculate session-RPE load for each day.
3. Identify the danger-spike day/week as a group.

Participant Handout — Module 3: Sports Science: Biomechanics, Load Management & Recovery

Notes & Worksheet

- ☐ Complete the session-RPE tracking sheet for the sample week.
- ☐ Review the biomechanics cue cards for throwing and cutting.

Reflection & Application

How would you introduce session-RPE tracking to players without it feeling like extra homework for them?

Quick Check

1. How is session-RPE load calculated?
2. What plant-step technique reduces non-contact injury risk when cutting?

Module 4: High-Performance Leadership & Team Culture

Duration: 3 hr

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Learning Objectives

- Build a team culture framework with non-negotiable standards.
- Handle role-acceptance conversations.
- Lead a diverse representative squad consistently.

Instructor Script

Culture at representative level is built deliberately, not left to chance — teach defining 2–3 non-negotiable team standards (e.g., punctuality, effort in reps that don't count, how the team talks about opponents) and holding every player, including the most talented, to them equally; a team's culture is only as strong as the standard tolerated for its best player.

Cover role acceptance: at representative level most players are asked to accept a smaller or different role than at club level, and an L3 coach needs a direct, respectful conversation framework for that — state the role, the reason, and the path to a bigger role, rather than leaving it unsaid.

Address leading a diverse squad drawn from different districts, backgrounds, and (in mixed/parallel programs) genders, with consistent standards applied without favoritism.

Key Teaching Points

- 2–3 non-negotiable standards applied equally
- Direct, respectful role-acceptance conversations

- Consistent leadership of a diverse squad

Activity: Role-Conversation Role-Play

1. Pair participants up.
2. One role-plays a difficult role-acceptance conversation using the script template.
3. Swap roles and debrief what worked.

Participant Handout — Module 4: High-Performance Leadership & Team Culture

Notes & Worksheet

- ☐ Complete the team standards worksheet (define your own 2–3 non-negotiables).
- ☐ Fill in the role-conversation script template.

Reflection & Application

Which of your own non-negotiable standards would be hardest to hold your most talented player to, and why?

Quick Check

1. What determines the real strength of a team's culture?
2. What three things should a role-acceptance conversation state?

Module 5: Data-Driven Performance Analysis

Duration: 3 hr

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Learning Objectives

- Build a season-long data tracking system.
- Use data to inform selection and tactical decisions.

Instructor Script

Extend the L2 stat sheet into a season tracking system: per-player and per-play efficiency (completion rate by route concept, flag-pull success rate by defender, penalty rate by player) tracked across the season rather than one game at a time, so patterns separate from small-sample noise.

Teach how to use this data in selection conversations — a data point ('this player's flag-pull success rate against motion is our team's lowest') is a more defensible, coachable selection conversation than an impression-based one, and gives the player something concrete to work on.

Caution against over-reliance on data without context — small-sided flag-football samples are noisy, and data should inform, not replace, direct observation.

Key Teaching Points

- Season-long efficiency tracking (not single-game)
- Data-informed selection conversations
- Data as an input, not a replacement for observation

Activity: Season Data Extract Exercise

1. Provide a season data extract for a fictional squad.
2. Groups identify one selection decision and one tactical decision the data supports.
3. Present findings and reasoning.

Participant Handout — Module 5: Data-Driven Performance Analysis

Notes & Worksheet

- ☐ Complete the season tracking template with the sample data.
- ☐ Draft a data-informed selection conversation using the script.

Reflection & Application

Where might you be tempted to over-trust a small, noisy sample of data over what you've actually observed?

Quick Check

1. Why should data inform rather than replace direct observation?
2. Give one example of a season-long efficiency metric.

Module 6: Mentorship & Coach Development

Duration: 2 hr

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Learning Objectives

- Mentor an L1/L2 coach through a development plan.
- Give effective coach-to-coach feedback.
- Contribute to U.P.A.F.A.'s coaching pipeline.

Instructor Script

An L3 coach is expected to actively grow the pipeline beneath them, not just coach their own team. Teach a simple mentorship structure: observe the mentee coach for a full session, identify one strength and one specific, actionable growth area — not three or four, since overload kills follow-through — and agree a concrete next step before the next observation.

Cover feedback delivery: coach-to-coach feedback should follow the same ‘specific and actionable’ standard taught at L1 assessment, delivered privately and followed up in writing so it isn't lost.

Discuss the L3 coach's role in the association's pipeline: identifying promising L1/L2 coaches for advancement, and being willing to have their own session observed as part of maintaining that culture.

Key Teaching Points

- One-strength-one-growth-area mentorship structure
- Specific, actionable, private feedback
- Contributing to the coaching pipeline

Activity: Mentorship Role-Play

1. Provide a fictional mentee session write-up.
2. Participants role-play the mentorship conversation in pairs.
3. Debrief what made the feedback specific and actionable.

Participant Handout — Module 6: Mentorship & Coach Development

Notes & Worksheet

- ☐ Complete the mentorship observation template for the fictional mentee.
- ☐ Draft the feedback conversation using the script.

Reflection & Application

Who is one L1/L2 coach you could realistically mentor in your own district, and what would their first growth area likely be?

Quick Check

1. How many growth areas should mentorship feedback focus on at once?
2. Should coach-to-coach feedback be delivered publicly or privately?

Module 7: Crisis & Conflict Management

Duration: 2 hr

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Learning Objectives

- De-escalate a conflict with a parent, player, or official.
- Manage a serious-incident response correctly.

Instructor Script

Teach a basic de-escalation sequence for a heated parent or player conflict: acknowledge the emotion first (‘I can see you're frustrated’), state what you can and can't do right there (‘I can't discuss selection during a live game, I can meet you after’), and remove the conversation from the sideline/in front of players if it's escalating.

Cover serious-incident response: for a significant injury, follow the Emergency Action Plan from L1 without deviation regardless of who is asking questions; for an alleged safeguarding concern, follow the exact reporting pathway from L1's safeguarding module rather than improvising — an L3 coach's instinct to ‘handle it personally’ is itself a safeguarding risk.

Address public conflict management (e.g., a confrontation that starts to draw a crowd or go on video) — the priority is always to de-escalate and remove, not to win the exchange.

Key Teaching Points

- De-escalation sequence (acknowledge / state / remove)
- Non-deviating Emergency Action Plan adherence
- Correct safeguarding escalation instead of self-handling

- Public conflict de-escalation

Activity: Live Role-Play Scenarios

1. Role-play a heated parent-conflict scenario.
2. Role-play a serious-injury scenario under pressure.
3. Structured debrief after each.

Participant Handout — Module 7: Crisis & Conflict Management

Notes & Worksheet

- ☐ Complete the de-escalation script card.
- ☐ Walk through the incident-response flowchart.

Reflection & Application

What's your instinct when you feel pressure to 'handle something personally' — and how do you resist that instinct?

Quick Check

1. What is the first step in the de-escalation sequence?
2. Why is 'handling it personally' risky for a safeguarding concern?

Module 8: Capstone Project

Duration: 8 hr + presentation

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Learning Objectives

- Produce a full competition-preparation plan for a representative squad.

Instructor Script

The capstone project requires each participant to produce a complete competition-preparation plan for a fictional or real representative squad: a periodized training calendar, a full offensive/defensive system with call sheet, a season-long data tracking plan, a team culture and leadership framework, and a risk/safeguarding plan — integrating every module from L1 through L3 into one coherent document.

This is presented to the certification panel, who assess integration and realism over polish; a plan that acknowledges its own risks and trade-offs is scored higher than one that reads as a flawless brochure.

Key Teaching Points

- Full-cycle integration of every prior module
- Panel evaluates realism and risk-awareness over polish

Activity: Structured Working Sessions

1. Draft each capstone section across scheduled working blocks.
2. Facilitator check-ins after each section.
3. Final rehearsal of the panel presentation.

Participant Handout — Module 8: Capstone Project

Notes & Worksheet

- ☐ Complete the capstone template section by section.
- ☐ Prepare your panel presentation using the scoring rubric as a guide.

Reflection & Application

Which section of your capstone plan currently feels weakest, and what would strengthen it most?

Quick Check

1. What does the panel value more — a flawless-looking plan or one that acknowledges its own risks?
2. Name three components the capstone must integrate.

Module 9: Supervised Practicum

Duration: Evaluated live

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

Learning Objectives

- Coach live at a sanctioned tournament under panel evaluation.

Instructor Script

Each L3 candidate coaches a squad through a sanctioned tournament fixture (or a designated portion of one) while a certification panel observes in person. Evaluation covers every domain from the pathway: tactical management, in-game adjustment, player communication and culture, safety/safeguarding adherence, and composure under competitive pressure.

This is scored pass/fail with a full written report, and is the final gate before L3 certification is awarded.

Key Teaching Points

- Live, full-context evaluation across all prior domains
- Pass/fail with written panel report

Activity: Live Tournament Assignment

1. Candidate is assigned to coach at a sanctioned tournament fixture.
2. Panel observes in person across all evaluation domains.
3. Written report and certification decision follow.

Participant Handout — Module 9: Supervised Practicum

Notes & Worksheet

- ☐ Complete the candidate self-reflection form after the practicum.

Reflection & Application

What part of the pathway are you most confident about heading into this practicum, and what part concerns you most?

Quick Check

1. What is the outcome format of the supervised practicum?
2. What comes after a successful supervised practicum?

Appendix: Instructor Answer Key

For instructor/assessor use only — not for participant distribution.

Module 1: International Rulebook: IFAF / World Games / LA28 Competition Format

1. How long is each half in international 5v5 competition? — 20 minutes (two halves, running clock with defined stoppages).
2. Who enforces the rusher count at international level? — The referee, not the coach.

Module 2: Advanced Tactical Systems & Opposition Scouting

1. What counts as a genuine halftime adjustment at L3? — A structural change — new formation or coverage shell — not just a different play call within the same structure.
2. Name two things logged when scouting an opponent. — Base coverage/rush trigger and their tendency by down-and-distance (or their ‘money plays’).

Module 3: Sports Science: Biomechanics, Load Management & Recovery

1. How is session-RPE load calculated? — Session duration multiplied by the athlete's 1–10 exertion rating.
2. What plant-step technique reduces non-contact injury risk when cutting? — A lower center of mass and a wider base on the plant step.

Module 4: High-Performance Leadership & Team Culture

1. What determines the real strength of a team's culture? — The standard tolerated for the team's best player, not the stated rules.
2. What three things should a role-acceptance conversation state? — The role, the reason for it, and the path to a bigger role.

Module 5: Data-Driven Performance Analysis

1. Why should data inform rather than replace direct observation? — Small-sided flag-football samples are noisy, so data provides context, not a final verdict.
2. Give one example of a season-long efficiency metric. — Completion rate by route concept, or flag-pull success rate by defender.

Module 6: Mentorship & Coach Development

1. How many growth areas should mentorship feedback focus on at once? — One — overloading with several kills follow-through.
2. Should coach-to-coach feedback be delivered publicly or privately? — Privately, followed up in writing.

Module 7: Crisis & Conflict Management

1. What is the first step in the de-escalation sequence? — Acknowledge the emotion.
2. Why is ‘handling it personally’ risky for a safeguarding concern? — It bypasses the correct reporting pathway and is itself a safeguarding risk.

Module 8: Capstone Project

1. What does the panel value more — a flawless-looking plan or one that acknowledges its own risks? — One that acknowledges its own risks and trade-offs.

2. Name three components the capstone must integrate. — Any three of: periodized training calendar, offensive/defensive system, data tracking plan, culture/leadership framework, risk/safeguarding plan.

Module 9: Supervised Practicum

1. What is the outcome format of the supervised practicum? — Pass/fail, with a full written panel report.
2. What comes after a successful supervised practicum? — L3 certification is awarded.