Olea Cup U17 tournament regulations 2026

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Hotel Olea, in cooperation with the City of Novalja and NK Novalja, is organizing the international youth tournament OLEA CUP, which will take place from 9 to 13 November 2026 for the U-17 age category. Eight (8) clubs will participate in the tournament. Matches will be played according to the rules of the International Football Association Board (IFAB).

1. GROUP STAGE

1.1. The clubs in the preliminary stage are divided into two (2) groups of four (4) clubs each. All matches in the groups will be played in a round-robin system - each club against all others in its group. A win is awarded three (3) points, and a draw one (1) point.

1.2. Clubs finishing first in their groups will play in the final match for 1st place.

Clubs finishing second in their groups will play for 3rd place.

1.3. If two clubs finish with the same number of points, the advantage goes to the club that won their head-to-head match. If the head-to-head match ended in a draw, the club with the better goal difference (scored vs. conceded) will be ranked higher. If goal difference is equal, the club with more goals scored will have the advantage. If all criteria remain equal, fair play will be taken into account:

yellow card = 1 negative point

second yellow card = 3 negative points

direct red card = 4 negative points

yellow card + direct red card = 5 negative points

1.4. If more than two clubs have the same number of points, a separate mini-table is created with results only from their head-to-head matches. Ranking is then determined by:

points in head-to-head matches

goal difference in head-to-head matches

goal difference in all matches

higher number of goals scored

If still equal, the fair-play criteria from Article 1.3 will apply.

2. FINAL STAGE

2.1. The final for first place and the third-place match are played as knockout matches. There are no fifth- or seventh-place matches.

2.2. If a match in the final stage ends in a draw, a penalty shootout of five (5) penalties per team will follow.

2.3. If the score is still tied, teams continue alternating penalties until a decisive goal determines the winner.

3. PENALTIES

3.1. Each team alternately takes five (5) penalty kicks, with each kick taken by a different player.

3.2. The team that takes the first penalty is decided by a coin toss.

3.3. Only players who were on the pitch at the end of regular time (2 × 30 minutes) may participate in the shootout.

3.4. The winner is the club that scores more goals after the penalties, or through sudden death if required.

4. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

4.1. Players born on or after 1 January 2010 are eligible to participate in the tournament.

4.2. Each player must present a player ID card and a personal ID card. Players from foreign clubs must provide either a passport or ID card. These documents confirm identity.

4.3. Each club may register a maximum of 18 players for each match, all of whom are listed on the official match sheet. Before the first match, clubs must submit to the delegate:

the list of players participating in the tournament

player ID cards

personal ID card or passport (for foreign players)

4.4. The list of players must include: full name, date of birth, and ID/passport number. The list must be signed by the club's authorized representative.

4.5. During a match, seven (7) substitutions are allowed, on three (3) substitution occasions, in accordance with HNS (Croatian Football Federation) regulations.

4.6. Each team may include players not officially registered with the club, provided the club representative ensures valid identification confirming the player's age and written authorization from the player's parent club.

5. MATCH DURATION

5.1. Each match lasts 2 × 30 minutes, with no extra time.

5.2. Teams must appear on the field at the exact time scheduled in the official tournament program. Failure to appear is treated as withdrawal from the competition and a 3:0 forfeit defeat.

6. REFEREES

6.1. Main and assistant referees for all matches are appointed by the HNS Referee Commission.

7. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

7.1. A player receiving three (3) yellow cards will be suspended for one match.

7.2. A player receiving a red card will be suspended for the next match.

7.3. A player sent off for a serious offense may receive a longer suspension, decided by the disciplinary referee appointed by the Tournament Committee.

7.4. All suspensions apply to matches within the tournament.

8. TOURNAMENT AWARDS

8.1. The Tournament Committee will select the best goalkeeper, best player, and top scorer.

8.2. If two or more players score the same number of goals, the top scorer award goes to the player whose team achieved the higher overall placement.

9. APPEALS

9.1. Appeals may only be submitted in cases specified in Articles 4 and 7 of these Regulations.

9.2. Each club has the right to submit an appeal within 30 minutes after the end of a match.

9.3. Decisions made by referees cannot be appealed, except in cases of a serious violation of the Laws of the Game and IFAB decisions, as regulated by the HNS Competition Rules.

9.4. Appeals are decided by the Tournament Committee, and its decision is final.

10. OTHER PROVISIONS

10.1. The tournament organizer provides accommodation and meals for up to 25 persons per club, unless otherwise agreed.

10.2. Each team representative must be available to the organiser to participate in procedural and promotional activities included in the tournament programme. The organiser will notify team representatives in good time of the time, place and purpose of these activities.

11. ARRIVAL TO THE TOURNAMENT

11.1. Participating clubs must arrive at the group-stage venue on 9 November 2026 no later than 19:00 to attend dinner and the representatives' meeting. The event formally begins on 9 November 2026 at 14:00.

11.2. Dinner will be organized at the hotel from 19:00 to 21:00.

11.3. A meeting with club representatives will be held at 21:00, after dinner, in the Hotel Olea conference hall.

12. DEPARTURE FROM THE TOURNAMENT

12.1. The tournament ends on 13 November 2026 at 14:00. Clubs will leave Hotel Olea after lunch, unless otherwise agreed with the organiser.

12.2. Clubs staying beyond the official departure date will cover all additional accommodation and meal costs themselves.

12.3. The tournament organizer is not responsible for any injuries or accidents sustained by players during matches. Clubs are required to insure their players against injuries and accidents.

12.4. Each team must include at least one member of medical staff (physiotherapist or doctor) within their coaching staff.