

***FIRST®* TECH CHALLENGE EUROPEAN PREMIER EVENT 2026**

Rule updates



STEAMUP®

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Unless otherwise stated in this document, all rules apply as stated in the latest version of the [FIRST Tech Challenge COMPETITION MANUAL](#).

1. Event Rules (E)

- E105. ***Teams must check in.** An adult team member must check in at the Pit Administration station, or the designated check in location, ~~no later than 45 minutes before Qualification MATCHES are scheduled to start~~ **no later than 30 minutes before pits close on Wednesday** unless otherwise specified or approved by the Event Director.
- E508 ***Structures must be safe.** Teams may not build any structure that supports the weight of people or stores items overhead. Structures may not block or inhibit fire sprinkler systems or otherwise be unsafe. **Canopy structures of any kind are prohibited.**

2. European Premier Event (P)

A few modifications will be made at the European Premier Event to more closely resemble the experience at the *FIRST* Championship. This section will serve as a replacement of Section 15 of the *FIRST* Tech Challenge COMPETITION MANUAL.

3. Awards Modification

Portfolio Submissions

Teams have the opportunity to submit a team PORTFOLIO to be used as part of the judging process. For the European Premier Event, teams will be required to hand in a copy of their portfolio during check-in.

European Premier Event Interview Process

At the European Premier Event, instead of a structured interview, teams will be judged in pit-based interviews. Teams must attend the initial pit interview to be considered for any judged awards at the European Premier Event.

During the initial pit interview, teams will have up to 10 minutes to talk to the JUDGES. There are no restrictions on the number of people or restrictions on recordings of audio or video, or photos besides restrictions outlined in E117 during the pit-based interviews.

Initial interviews consist of the following:

- A. In addition to submitting their PORTFOLIOS as outlined above, teams are encouraged to have an electronic or physical copy of their PORTFOLIO or other supporting materials available to reference during this interview.
- B. Teams have the opportunity to give a prepared 5-minute uninterrupted presentation
- C. Teams will be asked the same baseline questions:
 - a. Did your team have to make any compromises in your ROBOT design?
 - b. How did your team set your goals and strategies for the season?

- D. If time allows, teams may be asked additional questions by the JUDGES on
- a. Machine, Creativity, and Innovation (MCI) topics
 - b. Team Attributes (TA) topics

Teams should inform the JUDGES at the start of the interview if they have a presentation or want to proceed directly into the Q&A session.

Teams should be conscious of the time allocated for their interview. Although a team may opt to give a presentation, it is not required, and teams will not be given additional questions and answer time to accommodate this presentation. The interview will conclude after approximately 10 minutes with the JUDGES.

After this initial interview is conducted, JUDGES will continue the judging process using information they gather from the PORTFOLIO (if submitted) and additional interviews outlined in section [6.1.3 Pit Interview\(s\)](#).

Teams are encouraged to have one representative present in their pit during active judging windows as noted in the Event Public Schedule to help coordinate a meeting with the JUDGES.

JUDGES will make every effort to interview teams in their pit, while respecting MATCH and lunch schedules. When necessary, interviews may take place elsewhere in the pit area, such as in the practice FIELD line.

4. Game Modification

Game modifications at the European Premier Event are outlined below.

FIELDS

All division FIELDS will be placed on risers which are elevated approximately 24 in. (60.95 cm) from the floor. All DRIVE TEAM members and FIELD STAFF will be at floor level. None of the practice FIELDS will also be elevated for teams to use. To see examples of how the elevated FIELD looks, please watch the field tour video from Kickoff or matches from the FIRST Championship.

Scoring and Timing

At the European Premier Event, the transition between AUTO and TELEOP is 15 seconds, instead of the 8-second transition mentioned in Section 10.1, Section 10.4, Table 9-1, and Section 16 in the definition of MATCH.

5. 3-ROBOT ALLIANCES

ALLIANCES at the European Premier Event will be made up of 3 ROBOTS. Before each division playoff tournament, ALLIANCES are selected per the process as described in section 13.7.1 ALLIANCE Selection Process; however, the process continues with a 2nd round of selection as follows:

Round 2: The same method is used for each ALLIANCE lead's second choice except the selection order is reversed, with ALLIANCE 8 picking first and ALLIANCE 1 picking last. This process results in 8 ALLIANCES of 3 teams each.

ALLIANCES may start each of their MATCHES with any 2 of the 3 ROBOTS on their ALLIANCE during Playoff MATCHES. ALLIANCES do not need to inform FIELD STAFF of which 2 ROBOTS will play ahead of the MATCH but must not delay the start of the MATCH per G301 by making a late decision.

For example, an ALLIANCE deciding a different set of 2 ROBOTS will be playing in the MATCH after 2 ROBOTS have left queuing is likely a delay of MATCH.

P501. ***Replays use the same ROBOTS.** If a Playoff MATCH must be replayed, the 2 ROBOTS used in the replay must be the same as in the original MATCH. The sole exception is: if, in the opinion of the Head REFEREE, the ARENA FAULT rendered a ROBOT inoperable, in which case the ROBOTS can be changed. If an additional MATCH is played due to a tie, any 2 of the 3 ROBOTS may be played in the additional MATCH.

FIRST Tech Challenge teams play significantly more matches at the European Premier Event than they do at most events, and there are significantly more teams at the event. Drafting a 3rd ROBOT provides each ALLIANCE with a built-in backup ROBOT and flexibility to draft for different MATCH strategies in mind.

6. Facilities

Practice Fields

Four (4) staffed practice fields will be set up for teams to use. A DRIVE TEAM may join the shared practice queue with their ROBOT. At the practice field, teams are given a ten (10) minute window. This window includes setup, practice and teardown time. Once the window has passed, the practice field slots will be assigned to teams from the queue on a first come first serve basis. Only teams competing at the event are eligible to use the practice fields unless external permission is allowed by the Head Referee or Event Coordinator.

Jankshed

The Jankshed is a designated area that teams may use to diagnose and fix complicated robot problems and manufacture replacement parts or upgrades. Technical staff is always present to assist with this.

Machine Shop

The Jankshed contains an array of power tools that can be used to fabricate new parts. These power tools may only be operated by the event Technical Staff.

7. Robot Inspection

At the European Premier Event, inspection will be split into two different parts.

1. Sizing and Control Inspection
2. Hardware Inspection

Only when a team has passed both parts of inspection is it eligible to participate in qualification matches and join the practice field queue.

Sizing and Control Inspection

TEAMS are required to report to Sizing and Control inspection during load-in on Wednesday in the queuing area. This part of the inspection will check the 'Sizing' and 'Control' parts of the inspection checklist. Once a team has passed this part of inspection, they will be placed in a queue for Hardware Inspection.

Hardware Inspection

Hardware inspection will take place in a TEAM'S pit on Wednesday or Thursday. This inspection will concern the remaining part of the inspection checklist. Inspectors will visit teams in order of a first in first out system created by the scoring system. Teams that passed Sizing and Control inspection earlier will be further forward in the queue.

Reinspection

If a TEAM fails to meet the requirements to pass inspection before the inspection window closes on Thursday or is otherwise required to go through reinspection as noted in the COMPETITION MANUAL, teams are required to report at the Jankshed. Here, both parts of inspection can be done.

8. Qualification MATCHES

Qualification matches will start immediately after Opening Ceremony Friday morning and will conclude Friday afternoon then restart Saturday morning and conclude mid-day Saturday before Alliance Selection.

TEAMS will be split up into two (2) divisions: Escher and Lovelace. Each division will be played on two (2) fields, with matches alternating between them.

We will aim to give each team 8 qualification matches each, however due to time constraints or extenuating circumstances, this number may be reduced at the discretion of the Head Referee or Event Director. Any changes to the event schedule will be communicated to the teams at the time of the change.

9. Playoff MATCHES

Each DIVISION will form eight (8) ALLIANCES which will merge into a single sixteen (16) ALLIANCE double elimination bracket. Each alliance starts in the upper bracket. When an ALLIANCE wins a MATCH, they will move to the next round. When an ALLIANCE loses a match in the upper bracket, they will move down to the lower bracket. When an ALLIANCE loses a match in the lower bracket, they are eliminated from the tournament.

If a playoff MATCH needs to be replayed as described in section 13.3 MATCH Replays (from the COMPETITION MANUAL) or an additional MATCH needs to be played due to tie, teams are notified of when the MATCH will occur. A minimum 8-minute delay is provided for teams to reset their ROBOTS prior to the MATCH unless all teams are ready sooner (T206). The affected MATCH must be played before the next round begins.

