

RACQUETBALL Rules & Regulations

The University of Akron Student Recreation & Wellness Services Intramural Sports

Participation in any and all activities within this facility and/or sponsored by The University of Akron is voluntary. All participants understand and agree that use of this facility and/or participation in an activity sponsored by the university is at their own risk and that the university is not responsible for any incidents, injuries or loss of property that may occur.

All team representatives, including players, substitutes, replaced players, coaches, trainers, spectators and/or other persons affiliated with the team are subject to the rules of the game and shall be governed by decisions of Officials assigned to the game as well as the Site Supervisor.

Current USA Racquetball rules shall apply, with the following clarifications and modifications in effect:

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- All students, faculty or staff can participate provided they meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the Intramural Sports Participants Handbook. All participants must present a valid, physical copy, University of Akron ZipCard. **NO ID, NO PLAY!**
- Racquetball shall take place in the Ocasek Natatorium, adjoining the Student Recreation & Wellness Center.
- A player may only play on one (1) team in any given league (i.e.: one single-gender team, and one co-rec team).
- **This is a self-officiated event;** any disputes can be brought to the attention of the Site Supervisor. If there is still no resolve, the serve shall be replayed.
- Each team shall designate to the Officials a player as the court captain. This person is the only player who may communicate with the Officials.

EQUIPMENT:

- Racquets will be available to sign out at the ONAT Front Desk and racquetballs will be available for purchase at the ONAT or SRWC Front Desk, **participants may provide their own racquetballs if they desire.**
- Players may wear a headband made of soft pliable material. No other headwear will be allowed.
- **Shirts and shorts MUST be worn by all players.**
- Non-marking athletic shoes must be worn. No sandals, boots or non-athletic shoes will be allowed.
- **All jewelry must be removed, and can NOT be taped over.**
 - Only Medical Alert bracelets and/or necklaces will be permitted, and must be taped to the body, leaving vital information visible.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Points and Outs** - Points are scored by either side when they serve an ace or wins a rally. When the serving side loses a rally, they lose the serve. Losing the serve is called an "out" in singles and a "handout" in doubles.
- **Game** - A game is won by the side who scores 15 points first.
- **Match** - A match is won by the first side winning two games. The third game, if necessary, of a match is played to eleven (11) points. It is not necessary to win any game by two (2) points.
- **Short Line** - The short line is midway between and is parallel with the front and back walls dividing the court into equal front and back courts.
- **Service Line** - The service line is parallel with and located 5 feet in front of the short line.
- **Service Zone** - The service zone is the space between the outer edges of the short and service lines.

- **Service Boxes** - A service box is located at each end of the service zone by lines 18 inches from and parallel with each side wall.
- **Receiving Lines** - Five feet back of the short line, vertical lines shall be marked on each side wall extending 3 inches from the floor.

SERVE:

- The player or side winning the toss becomes the first server and starts the first game, and the third game as needed.
- The server may serve from any place in the service zone. Stepping on the line (but not beyond it) is permitted. The server must remain in the service zone until the served ball passes the short line. Violations are called "foot faults".
- A serve begins as the ball leaves the server's hand. The ball must bounce to the floor in the service zone and on the first bounce be struck by the server's racquet so that it hits the front wall first and on the rebound hits the floor back of the short line, either with or without touching one of the side walls.
- Serves shall not be made until the receiver is ready.

DEFECTIVE SERVES:

- **Dead Ball Serve** - A dead ball serve results in no penalty and the server is given another serve without canceling a prior illegal serve.
- **Fault Serve** - Two fault serves result in a sideout.
- **Out Serves** - An out serve results in a sideout.

DEAD BALL SERVES:

Dead ball serves do not cancel any previous illegal serve. They occur when an otherwise legal serve:

- **Hits Partner** - Hits the server's partner on the rebound from the front wall while the server's partner is in the service box. Any serve that touches the floor before hitting the partner in the box is a short.
- **Screen Balls** - Passes too close to the server or the server's partner and obstructs the view of the returning side. Any serve passing behind the server's partner and the side wall is an automatic screen.
- **Court Hinders** - Hits any part of the court that under local rules is a dead ball.

FAULT SERVES:

The following serves are faults and any two in succession result in a handout:

- **Foot Faults** - A foot fault results:
 - When the server leaves the service zone before the served ball passes the short line.
 - When the server's partner leaves the service zone before the served ball passes the short line.
- **Short Serve** - A short serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and on rebound hits the floor in front of the back edge of the short line either with or without touching one side wall.
- **Three-Wall Serve** - A three-wall serve is any ball served that first hits the front wall and on the rebound hits two side walls on the fly.
- **Ceiling Serve** - A ceiling serve is any served ball that touches the ceiling after hitting the front wall either with or without touching one side wall.
- **Long Serve** - A long serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and rebounds to the back wall before touching the floor.
- **Out of Court Serve** - Any ball going out of the court on the serve.

OUT SERVES:

Any one of the following serves results in a handout:

- Bounces - Bouncing the ball more than three times while in the service zone before striking the ball. One bounce is counted each time the ball hits the floor within the service zone. Once the server is within the service zone and the receiver is ready, the ball may not be bounced anywhere but on the floor within the service zone. Accidental dropping of the ball counts as one bounce.
- Missed Ball - Any attempt to strike the ball on the first bounce that results either in a total miss or in touching any part of the server's body other than their racquet.
- Non-Front Service - Any served ball that strikes the server's partner, or the ceiling, floor or side wall, before striking the front wall.
- Out-of-Order Serve - In doubles, when either partner serves out of order. Any points which may have been scored during an out-of-order serve will be automatically void with the score reverting to the score prior to the out-of-order serve.
- Crotch Serve - If the served ball hits the crotch in the front wall it is considered the same as hitting the floor and is an out. A crotch serve into the back wall is good and in play.

RETRUN OF SERVES:

- The receiver or receivers must stand at least 5 feet back of the line, as indicated by the 3 inch vertical line on each side wall, and cannot return the ball until it passes the short line. Any infraction results in a point for the server.
- To eliminate any misunderstanding the receiving side should not catch or touch a defectively served ball until it has touched the floor for the second time.
- In making a fly return, no part of the receiver's body or racquet may enter into the service zone. A violation by a receiver results in a point for the server.
- After the ball is legally served, one of the players on the receiving side must strike the ball with his racquet either:
 - On the fly or after the first bounce and before the ball touches the floor the second time to return the ball to the front wall either directly or
 - After touching one or both side walls, the back wall or the ceiling, or any combination of those surfaces.
 - A returned ball may not touch the floor before touching the front wall.
 - It is legal to return the ball by striking the ball into the back wall first, then getting the front wall on the fly or after hitting the side wall or ceiling.
- The failure to return a serve results in a point for the server.

CHANGES OF SERVE:

- Handout - A server is entitled to continue serving until:
 - Out Serve - He/She makes an out serve under Rule 6 or;
 - Fault Serves - He/She makes two fault serves in succession under Rule 5 or;
 - Hits Partner - He/She hits his/her partner with an attempted return before the ball touches the floor the second time.
 - Return Failure - He/She or his/her partner fail to keep the ball in play by returning it as required by the rule dealing with the Legal Return.
 - Avoidable Hinder - He/She or his/her partner commits an avoidable hinder described below.
- Side-out
 - In singles, retiring the server retires the side.
- When the server or the side loses the serve, the server or serving side shall become the receiver; and the receiving side, the serve; and so alternately in all subsequent services of the game.

RALLIES:

Each legal return after the serve is called a rally. Play during rallies shall be according to the following rules:

- One or Both Hands - Only the head of the racquet may be used at any time to return the ball. The ball must be hit with the racquet in one or both hands. Switching hands to hit a ball is out. The use of any portion of the body is an out.
- One Touch - In attempting returns, the ball may be touched only once by one player on the returning side. In doubles, both partners may swing at, but only one may hit the ball. Each violation of (A) or (B) results in a handout or point.
- Return Attempts
 - In singles, if a player swings at but misses the ball in play, the player may repeat his/her attempts to return the ball until it touches the floor the second time.
 - In singles or doubles, if a player swings at but misses the ball in play, and in his/her partner's attempt again to play the ball there is an unintentional interference by an opponent it shall be a hinder.
- Except as provided in Rule 10, (A)(2), any touching of a ball before it touches the floor the second time by a player other than the one making a return is a point or out against the offending player.
- Out of Court Ball
 - After Return - Any ball returned to the front wall which on the rebound or on the first bounce goes into the gallery or through any opening in a side wall shall be declared dead and the serve replayed.
 - No Return - Any ball not returned to the front wall, but which caroms off a player's racquet into the gallery or into any opening in a side wall either with or without touching the ceiling, side or back wall, shall be an out or point against the players failing to make the return.
- During the game and particularly on services every effort should be made to keep the ball dry. Deliberately wetting shall result in an out.
- If there is any suspicion that a ball has broken on the serve or during a rally, play shall continue until the end of the rally.
- Play Stoppage
 - If a player loses a shoe or other equipment, or foreign objects enter the court, or any other outside interference occurs, the referee shall stop the play.
 - If a player loses control of his/her racquet, time should be called after the point has been decided, providing the racquet does not strike an opponent or interfere with ensuing play.

HINDERS:

DEAD BALL HINDERS:

Hinders are of two types - "dead ball" and "avoidable". Dead ball hinders as described in this rule result in the point being replayed. Avoidable hinders are described in Rule XI.

- Situations - When called by the referee, the following are dead ball hinders:
 - Court Hinders - Hits any part of the court which under local rules is a dead ball.
 - Hitting Opponent - Any returned ball that touches an opponent on the fly before it returns to the front wall.
 - Body Contact - Any body contact with an opponent that interferes with seeing or returning the ball.
 - Screen Ball - Any ball rebounding from the front wall close to the body of a player on the side which just returned the ball, to interfere with or prevent the returning side from seeing the ball.
 - Straddle Ball - A ball passing between the legs of a player on the side which just returned the ball, if there is no fair chance to see or return the ball.
 - Other Interference - Any other unintentional interference which prevents an opponent from having a fair chance to see or return the ball.
- Effect - A "hinder" stops the play and voids any situation following, such as the ball hitting a player.

- Avoidance - While making an attempt to return the ball, a player is entitled to a fair chance to see and return the ball. It is the duty of the side that has just served or returned the ball to move so that the receiving side may go straight to the ball and not be required to go around an opponent.

AVOIDABLE HINDERS:

An avoidable hinder results in an "out" or a point depending upon whether the offender was serving or receiving.

- Does not move sufficiently to allow opponent his/her shot.
- Moves into a position effecting a block, on the opponent about to return the ball, or, in doubles, one partner moves in front of an opponent as his/her partner is returning the ball.
- Moves in the way and is struck by the ball just played by his/her opponent.
- Deliberately pushing or shoving an opponent during a rally.

REST PERIOD:

- Deliberate delay exceeding ten seconds by server, or receiver shall result in an out or point against the offender.
- During a game each player in singles, or each side in doubles, either while serving or receiving may request a "time-out" for a towel, wiping glasses, change or adjustment. Each "time out" shall not exceed 30 seconds. No more than three "time outs" in a game shall be granted each singles player or each team in doubles. No player shall call a time out once the ball is in play.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:

- Racquetball is a **self-officiated sport**. Participants must determine their own calls and come to agreement regarding points earned.
 - If participants are not able to come to a consensus, regarding a particular play, in a timely manner, the Intramural staff on-site will announce the game a **Double Forfeit**.
- Intramural staff on-site may penalize a player(s) with a Yellow/Red Card if unsportsmanlike behavior is displayed.
 - A player receiving a yellow card must substitute out for at least one (1) rally point.
 - Yellow cards are valued at one (1) point, and red cards are valued at two (2) points. If a team accumulates four (4) points in cards during a match, it will result in forfeiture.

AWARDS:

- The winning team will receive Intramural Sports Champion T-shirts.

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