

**2024 Stonewall Sports Tournament and Summit
Dodgeball Classic Tournament Overview and Rules
Revised Mar 8, 2024**

Tournament Format:

Day 1: Round Robin tournament. Each match will be 20 minutes in length.

Day 2: Double Elimination Tournament. Seeding will be based on standings from round robin. The Upper Bracket will consist of the top half of teams based on Day 1 performance. The Lower Bracket will consist of all remaining teams. Brackets will be determined using the following formula:

- Standings are determined by the **number of matches won by a team.**
- If two teams have the same amount of win/loss/tie then their order in the standings will be **determined by head-to-head.**
- If the teams tied when they played each other or if they haven't played each other then the standings will be determined by **more total game points scored for.**
- Team with **less points scored against**
- Team with **greater score differential** (games won minus games lost)
- Leadership coin toss

Gameplay: Hit an opponent with a ball to get them out. If they catch it, you're out and they get a player back in. A team wins a game when no players remain "in" on the opponent's team.

Matches: The team with the most games won in the match wins. Matches are 20 minutes. Teams will switch sides **every game, with the number of balls on each side remaining the same.**

Day 1, Round-Robin play: Matches will be played for exactly 20 minutes (i.e. at 20 minutes, the refs should blow the whistle and end the game). If players remain in play on both teams, the game is a wash (example: going into the 4th game, Team A: 2, Team B: 1 – the final score would be 2-1-0). Referees should announce when 5 minutes and 2 minutes remain. Ties are possible on Day 1.

Day 2, Double Elimination Tournament: No ties. Matches on day 2 will be a best of 3 format. If a team goes up 2-0 on Day 2, the game will be complete and the third point will not be played. On Day 2, after 20 minutes, a "no blocking rule begins." **The whistle will be blown and all plays stop. Players will retreat to the back line with balls not resetting.** Players will take balls in their possession to the backline and begin on a whistle. Blocking or deflection results in an immediate out. **No blocking distinction:** a held ball is essentially an extension of the body. A thrown ball is still live when it contacts a player's blocking ball and may be caught/hit other players. A player who blocked a ball is not immediately dead; that player is still alive until the blocked ball completes its sequence. All other situations as outlined in the deflection section of the rules are still true during the no blocking distinction.

Day 2, Double Elimination Tournament - Championship Match ONLY: The Championship Match will be a best of 5 format. If a team goes up 3-0, the game will be complete and the final points will not be played. On Day 2, after 20 minutes, a "no blocking rule begins." **The whistle will be blown and all plays stop. Players will retreat to the back line with balls not resetting.** Players will take balls in their possession to the backline and begin on a whistle. Blocking or deflection results in an immediate out. No blocking distinction: a held ball is

essentially an extension of the body. A thrown ball is still live when it contacts a player's blocking ball and may be caught/hit other players. A player who blocked a ball is not immediately dead; that player is still alive until the blocked ball completes its sequence

Teams: Each team may have eight (8) players on the court at a time. Teams **must** have a minimum of two (2) women on the court at the beginning of each game. If a team only has two rostered women and one of those players gets injured, cannot play a game, or needs a break for whatever reason – the team will play down a player from the start of each game until the minimum number of two women at the start of each game is met. Teams who have substitutes (up to 4 additional players) may rotate them in at the beginning of the next game. **Substitutes must play the next game after sitting out.** Substitutes may not enter a game midway through. The penalty for violating any of these rules will be the forfeiture of the individual game during which the violation occurred.

Captain responsibilities: At the start of the match, captains will rock-paper-scissors for ball control/side. The winner of rock-paper-scissors may choose to either start with ball control or to start on a specific side of the court. After the decision is made, the other captain may choose the remaining category. For the Day 2 matches (Double Elimination Tournament), the higher-seeded team will automatically receive the choice of ball control or side preference. During the match, captains should liaise between their team and the referees, encouraging good sportsmanship and rule-following. Only captains may discuss calls with the referees or call timeouts. **At the end of each match, captains should ensure scores are recorded accurately. Sign the score sheet. No corrections will be made after the sheet is turned in.**

Starting the game: Eight (8) players will line up touching the back wall/net/curtain with any part of their body (court dependent) on both sides. When the referee blows the whistle, designated players may run to get the balls on the right (the ones on the left are for the opposing team). False starts, or when a player leaves the back wall prior to the initial whistle, will result in losing a ball to the other side **for one game**. Each team will be given 1 warning per match before the ball is lost. Players may step over the centerline on the initial rush, but doing so any time after that means the player is out. All balls must clear the attack line before they can be brought into play. A ball can be cleared one of two ways: (1) The retrieving player crosses the line with both feet or (2) the retrieving player may toss the ball to a player behind the attack line. ***Minimum number to start a game without forfeit is 4 players.**

Live ball/dead ball: A ball is live when it is thrown from behind the centerline. Live balls can hit players or be caught, resulting in outs. Kicking a ball does not qualify as a throw, and a kicked ball is not live. A single live ball can get multiple players out. (example: if a ball is deflected into another player, that player is out) until the ball is rendered dead. A ball becomes dead when it does any of the following:

- touches the floor, wall, ceiling, net, or any other part of the building
- touches another ball in the air
- touches a player who is already out or a non-player
- is caught
- comes back across the centerline

Note: A live player isn't out the moment they are hit, rather they are out when the ball that hit them becomes dead.

In the event of a trap (when a ball hits a player and a gym surface, such as the floor, at the same time), both players are safe, the ball is dead, and there is no valid catch.

The Center Line: Players may cross the center line only during the initial rush. Once a ball is cleared across the attack line during the initial rush, the center line will become the throw line for the remainder of the game. While players may reach across the centerline in order to retrieve a ball, they may not make contact with the floor of their opponent's court. Touching the floor of the opponent's court will result in a player being eliminated from play.



Boundaries (Sidelines & Back Line) & exiting the court: A player is out if the body or article of clothing touches the floor beyond the centerline (unless it is during the initial rush). The same applies to the sidelines. You may step on, but not over the sidelines. Players *may* reach across the centerline to retrieve a ball. Players may step out of bounds *only* to get a ball that is out of bounds. **They must exit and re-enter at the back of the court.** Players cannot step in or out of the court just anywhere, only at the very back of the court. Imagine a doorway four (4) feet wide extending off of the back wall. Once both feet are out of bounds for a valid reason, the player is safe until they return (by placing at least one foot back in bounds). The last player left may not exit the court, so their team should help get balls for them. Violating any of these sideline rules results in an out. Catches count only if the catching player has two (2) feet in bounds when caught.

Note: If the player makes the catch (control/possession obtained) with two feet in-bounds, but falls out of bounds due to momentum, they are not out due to stepping out of bounds and their catch still counts.

Similar to when shagging, **players who are out** must exit and re-enter at the back of the court. Players must raise their hand as exiting the court to designate being out. Players who repeatedly interfere with gameplay while exiting will receive a yellow card.

Deflections: A deflection occurs when a ball bounces off of a player or a ball that a player is holding. Deflecting a ball into yourself means that you are out (including deflecting into your own head). Deflecting a ball into someone else will result in an out. A thrown ball can get multiple players out. A ball that is deflected is still a live ball that can be caught until it touches any part of the building, the net, an out player or non-player, or another ball that is not being held by a player. On the other hand, a deflected ball can also get another player out, if the ball is deflected and hits another player and they don't catch it, they are out. A ball also becomes dead if it crosses back across the centerline, or is caught. Deflecting a ball that is then caught is treated as a regular catch such that anyone hit by the ball prior to the catch is safe, the thrower is out, and the catching team gets a player back in.

Maintaining ball control during deflections: If you deflect an incoming ball with a ball you're holding, you must maintain control of all of the ball(s) that you were holding immediately following the deflection or you are out. The same applies to catches if you are holding a ball(s) at the time of the catch.

Note: The above only applies to deflections. You may drop the ball that you are holding **BEFORE** catching the incoming ball in order to make a valid play.

Referees: All referee calls are final. *Do not argue with them.* If there is a dispute on a call, **only a team captain** may approach the Head Referee to discuss the call. **Captains MUST be wearing the captain band in order to talk to the ref.** The Head Referee can pause gameplay (but not the clock) to discuss a call. Referees will not acknowledge concerns/complaints from other members of the team. For calls that

require discussion, in general, referees should reach consensus on calls, with the head referee making the final call, if needed. The sport manager(s) will be available for additional escalation. Referees can call you out, **but they shouldn't have to**. Any player who knows that they should be out but does not go out will be given a penalty card for cheating.

Referees are advised to coordinate roles/areas of focus (for example, one watches one side only, another watches the other side only, and the remaining referees watch the entire match and are responsible for counting down ball control). Referees can stop play by blowing their whistle and walking onto the court, at which time all live balls are immediately declared dead until the referees resume play with their whistles.

Teams will provide 2 referees for assigned games (Head Ref/Line Ref). Teams may be penalized for not providing adequate referees.

Penalty Cards: **Blue card:** Issued as a warning to any player on or off the court for yelling, arguing or unsportsmanlike remarks. There is no consequence for (1) Blue card. Receiving (2) Blue cards will result in a Yellow card. **Yellow card:** issued for not abiding by the rules, not following referee instructions, arguing, yelling, and/or cheating. Players issued a yellow card are immediately out and must sit out the next game out too. They cannot be replaced (the team must play with fewer players). **Red card:** issued for two (2) yellow cards, grossly poor conduct, threats, discriminatory language, violence, and/or rude/insulting online communications. Additionally, crossing the centerline in an aggressive manner is grounds for a red card. Players are out for the entire match, cannot be replaced, and are subject to expulsion from the tournament. Both yellow cards and red cards will reset after each match. However, repeated violations can result in expulsion from the tournament per Leadership discretion.

Court Size: 50 x 25

Ball Control / Countdown: We play with 5 balls. Your team has ball control when you have 3+ balls. Your team has 15 seconds to give up ball control. After 5 seconds, referees declare "ball control" and your team has 10 seconds to give up ball control. Refs count silently for 5 seconds and begin counting out loud for the final 5 seconds, counting down from 5 to 0. **Failure to give up ball control at 0 means your team must give all the balls to the opposing team;** the ref will stop play and facilitate the transfer of balls. If additional balls come onto the side with ball control, they do not count for the timer: they're new balls so they aren't a part of the original timer. (Put another way, ball control applies to only the balls already present on the side with ball control. For example, if ball control is called with 3 balls on the side and an additional ball crosses, only 1 ball must cross the center line to the other side to give up ball control). Placing balls just over the centerline doesn't count as giving up control of them. All balls within the realm of the court count toward ball control (the *realm of the court* is defined as the area enclosed by the net and the gym walls adjacent to the court of play). Balls outside the realm of the court are not used for determining ball control. But if you bring a ball with you outside the realm of the court to shag another ball, the ball(s) that you left the court with will continue to count toward your team's ball control timer. A team with 3+ balls on their side still has ball control even if another ball is outside the realm of the court. Deliberately throwing balls so they return without giving the other team a chance to take control of them **or setting balls just over the centerline is stalling; referees will issue a warning for stalling; a second offense will result in balls being awarded to the other team.**

Ball Control for Singles: When a team is down to 1 player and that player has ball control, the timer resets to 10 seconds each time the player throws until they lose ball control. If referees deem the player is deliberately stalling, they may announce "Stalling! Last countdown!" and the timer will no longer reset with each throw until the player loses ball control.

Headshots: A direct headshot (that is - a ball that travels directly from an opposing player's hands to a defending player's head) will result in the ball immediately becoming a dead ball. It is not considered a headshot if you are dodging/ducking a ball, or in any position in which you are crouching - if you are hit in these circumstances in the head, it results in an out.

Players struck with direct headshots are not out unless they are struck simultaneously (or nearly simultaneously with other live balls).

Players who are hit in the face may remove themselves from play for up to two minutes (at the referee's discretion) in order to compose themselves and make sure they are still able to physically continue. However, if the player's team is eliminated while they are still off court, the game will be declared officially over.

Deliberately throwing at a person's face is not allowed under any circumstances. Players caught "headhunting" will be removed from game play. This includes players who repeatedly throw within "head range" (between 5'3" and 6'2") and continue to do so after they have been warned by a referee.

Deliberately using your head to block balls is also not allowed. If a referee believes a player is using their head to deflect offensive throws, that player will be declared out.

Outline: When you're out, line up on the side of the court with the first out closest to the back of the court. Players come in on catches in the same order they arrived in the line (**players on their way to the outline cannot come in on catches**, and the line order is determined by when the player arrives at the line rather than the order in which they got out). Returning players are active upon having 1 foot in bounds, and should reenter play in the back of the court.

Shagging: Out players may return out-of-bounds balls ("shagging") as long as the players stay on their side of the court. The balls must be promptly returned to play. Out players may not reach into the court or over into the other team's outline area for any reason. When a ball exits the realm of the court (i.e., it's in the rafters or on another court), players from either side may shag the ball regardless of their position relative to the centerline. If you're out, do not touch balls that are in play, even if you're still exiting the court. Out players should immediately move to the back of the court and exit on the designated side. Any ball that is shagged violating these rules will be awarded to the opposing team with repeated violations resulting in a yellow card.

Timeouts: Each team may utilize one (1) timeout per match, thirty (30) seconds long. A timeout starts when the captain notifies a referee, who will pause play. All out players, besides captain(s), should stay out of the play area. All live balls are immediately dead when the referee begins the timeout, and all players must leave idle balls where they lie. A timeout does not stop the official match time. Timeouts cannot be called after a referee has issued the two-minute end-of-match warning or for any play beyond 20 minutes.

Note: No time-outs may be called with less than two (2) minutes remaining in a match.

Distractions: *Players may use distraction techniques such as stomping, fake throws, noise, etc. as a means of distracting the opposing team's players, within reason. If distractions are considered aggressive or overly disruptive, the officials may issue a warning and/or a yellow card, if not stopped.*

Conduct: Players will treat all other players and officials with dignity and respect both on and off the court. Any verbal or physical actions by an individual or team, including, but not limited to, those based on discrimination related to race, skin pigmentation, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin will not be tolerated. If it is determined by the tournament coordinators that such instances have occurred, the player and/or team may be suspended/expelled from the tournament or not asked to return.

Players & T-Shirts: Only players registered for the tournament are permitted to play. Players may wear personalized uniforms. Stonewall Tournament shirt is required for Bracket Play on Sunday.

Shirt Numbering: Numbers are not required.

Miscellaneous Rules:

- Injured players may remove themselves from play for up to two minutes and then return to play if the same game is in session. They must return to the game before the last player still on the court is declared out. If the player is injured for a time beyond the game/match, that team, unfortunately, will continue the tournament without that player, and no new/unregistered player will be allowed to serve as a substitute.
- Gloves and taped fingers **are** allowed.
- Pinching the ball (so rubber touches rubber inside the ball) is not allowed in any way. First time is a warning. Second offense is a yellow card.
- Clothing counts! If a ball hits your article of clothing, you are out. Hats count as clothing. If a player wearing a tight hat like a beanie is hit in the head, it'll count as a headshot. But if a player wearing a larger hat, such as a ball cap or a hat with fake hair attached, is hit on a part of the hat other than the part directly covering their head, they're out. ***If a player's head gear (i.e. hats, sweatbands, etc.) is knocked off, they are out!***
- If each team has one remaining player and they throw at the same time, and both get hit, the side that wins is the one for which the ball becomes dead last. **If both players are simultaneously declared out, the refs will reset gameplay with five (5) balls – three (3) in the middle and one with each remaining player. All other rules remain in effect.**