



## OKC Rulebook and Scoresheets

### 2023 UPDATES:

#### **Revised Tiebreakers**

- Primary Tiebreaker: Head-to-Head
- Secondary Tiebreaker: Runs Against
- Tertiary Tiebreaker: Run Differential
- Quaternary Tiebreaker: Power Index
- Quinary Tiebreaker: Coin Flip

#### **Weighted Games Rankings**

At the end of the regular season, four groups of four teams each will be formed based on the season standings. These four groups will be the teams ranked #1-4, #5-8, #9-12 and #13-16. While the three weighted games are being played, teams can only move up or down within their group. For example, a team finishing the regular season ranked #6 will play the #5, #7, and #8 teams in the weighted games but cannot jump into the #4 seed nor fall to the #9 seed for the tournament regardless of the weighted games outcome. (Note: In the 2022 season the standings reset to zero going into the weighted games, that is no longer the case.)

#### **Obstruction Warning and Subsequent Yellow Cards**

Any defensive player determined to have illegally impeded progress of the runner shall be called for Obstruction and their entire team will receive a warning. Each subsequent infraction for Obstruction will be penalized with a yellow card for the offending player.

#### **Yellow and Red Card Documentation**

Any yellow or red cards issued in a game should be noted on the score sheet after the game so the cards can be documented by the OKC Board.

## Section 1: Objectives of the Game

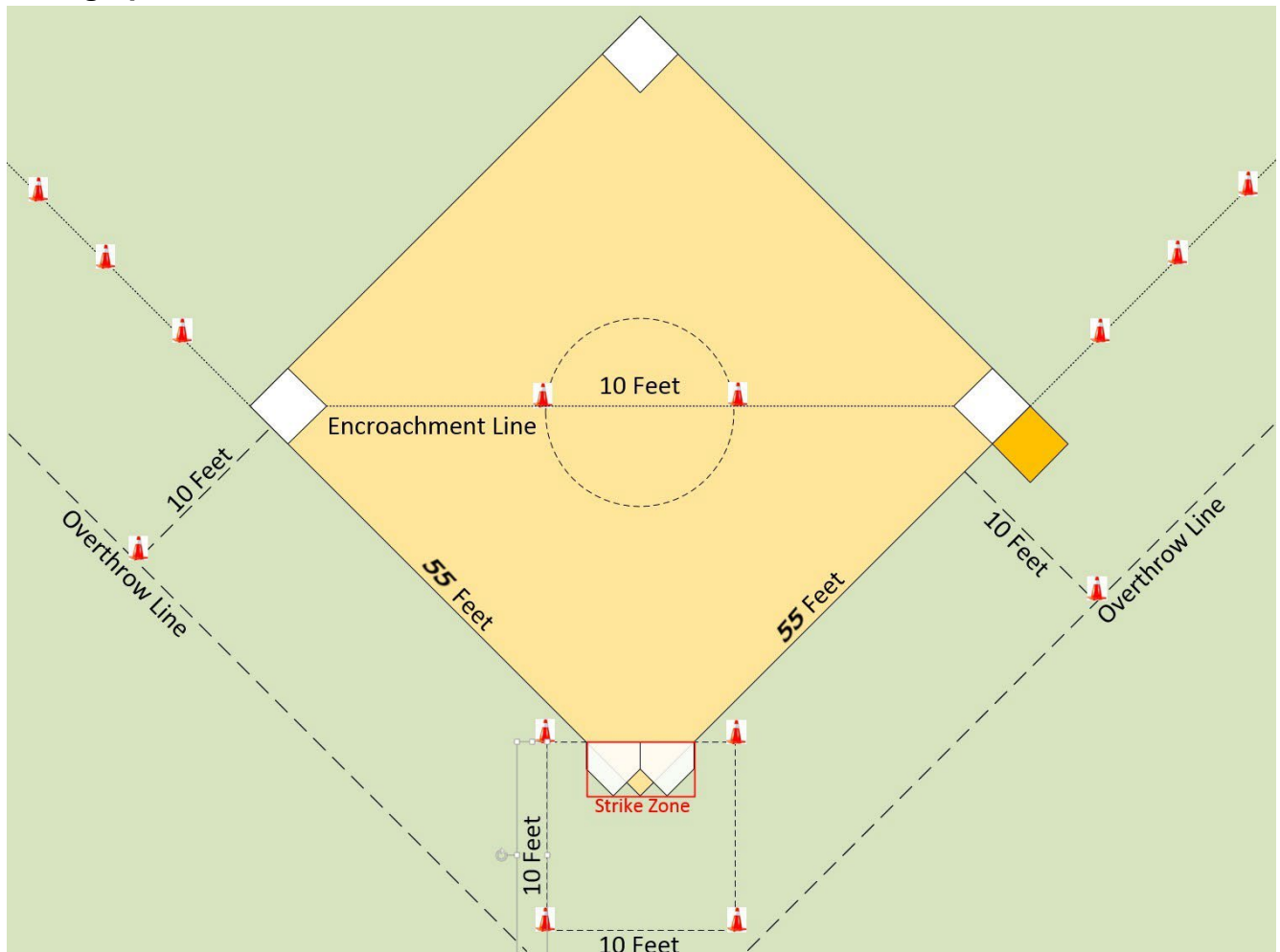
- Kickball is a game between two teams of at least 8 players each, played on a field in accordance with these rules, under the jurisdiction of one or more referees.
- The objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than their opponent.
- The winner of the game shall be the team which shall have scored, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game.
- The ball shall be a 10-inch, red playground ball. The Oregon Kickball Club (OKC) is responsible for providing bases, balls, pitching strips and cones.
- A maximum of 10 players from one team may be on the field at any given point. (Minimum of 4 of each gender. Nonbinary players may fill either gender role)
- All players are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and to treat other players and referees with courtesy and respect.

The league will make all efforts to have a complete schedule by two weeks before the first games. All games **MUST** be played on the date scheduled barring severe weather or other catastrophic events.

- In the event of scheduling conflicts that may affect entire teams, opposing captains can decide to accept a forfeit for the scheduled game, or reschedule based on the guidelines set forth below:
- Any teams wishing to jointly reschedule a game may do so with the approval of the board.
- The teams must find two qualified referees willing to ref the game at the time agreed upon by both captains.
- Since the game will most likely take place outside of a sanctioned and permitted OKC event, **TEAMS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALCOHOL PERMITS** (if necessary) and will not hold the league liable for any fines incurred for violation of Portland Parks policies.

## Section 2: Game Preliminaries

### Setting up the Field



A **Base** is one of four points which must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; more usually applied to the bags or rubber plates which mark the base points. Bases shall be set up 55 feet apart (to the back of the base) in a diamond shape with right angles.

**Home Plate** consists of two plates set up side-by-side. The two plates are considered to be one base, with full use by both the offense and defense.

**1st base** is the first base encountered counterclockwise around the diamond. It consists of two bases side-by-side, one extending on to the field of play from the foul line, the other extending into foul territory from the foul line. The left base- the one on the playing field- is considered usable by both the offense and the defense. The right base is considered a “safety base” and only to be used by the offense. For the purposes of

safety, if there is a chance of a play at first base, the kicker should run through the safety base to avoid a collision.

**2nd** and **3rd** are placed around the diamond counterclockwise from 1st; 2nd and 3rd base each consist of just a single base, respectively.

The **Foul Line** is the invisible line that extends from home plate through the middle of the double first base. Another foul line extends from home plate to the outside edge of 3rd base. Three cones shall be placed along each foul line as they proceed past their respective base in 10-foot intervals to make them more apparent to the referees. **Foul Territory** is that part of the playing field outside the first and third base lines extended to the cones or natural barrier determining the back limit of the outfield and perpendicularly upwards.

The **Overthrow line** is an invisible line running parallel to the foul line. Its distance is ten feet away and into foul territory, extending infinitely. (For more information see **Overthrows** in the fourth section of the rules.)

The **Overthrow cone** is the first cone placed beyond both 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base, placed 10 feet beyond either base respectively along the foul line.

The **Encroachment Line** is the imaginary line that runs from 1st to 3rd base.

The **Pitching Area** is a ten-foot diameter extending from the center of the pitching strip. The **Pitching Strip** is defined by two cones placed about 10 feet apart in the center of the diamond on the encroachment line.

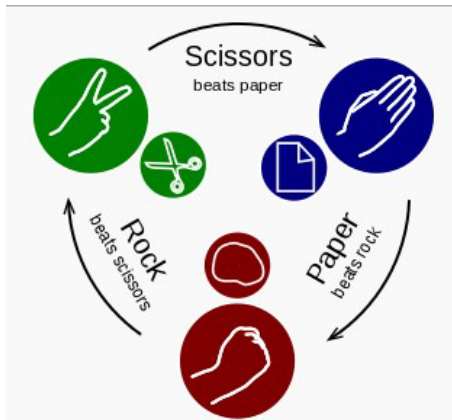
The **Catcher's Box** is a square marked out by four cones around home plate. The dimensions are ten feet by ten feet. The top and the bottom of the square should be parallel with the top edge of home plate, with home plate being in the middle of the top of the square.

**Required Footwear**- Players may not wear shoes with any metal on or in them whatsoever. If there is a question, the shoes will not be permitted if the ref determines that the metal can be dangerous to a player. This includes steel toe boots. Additionally, all shoes must be closed toed and player must wear shoes. If a player is unclear as to whether his footwear is legal they are encouraged to consult with the referee before the game.

A player may not be registered on two teams.

Drinking alcohol and/or smoking are not allowed on school grounds. Further, players or their guests shall not engage in illegal activity while participating or viewing OKC games and shall abide by the terms of the field permits.

The **Home Team** fields first. The home team shall be designated by mutual agreement (coin flip, RoShamBo) before the start of the game by the head referee and one representative from each team.



## Section Three: Roles

### Defense: Pitcher, Catcher and Fielder

**Pitcher:** The pitcher is the defensive player who delivers the ball to the kicker. The pitcher must have both of their feet behind the encroachment line and must have at least one foot planted inside of the Pitching Strip as viewed from home plate. If the pitcher fails to do both of these two things an Illegal Pitch can be called by either ref.

**Illegal Pitch:** Occurs when either of two things occur:

- The pitcher steps across the encroachment line while delivering a pitch
- The pitcher releases a pitch without at least one foot between the pitching cones

No kicker contact is required for an illegal pitch to be called. When an illegal pitch occurs, the ref will silently raise their hand and wait until the end of the play to make the call. The result of an illegal pitch is always 'ball', or the result of the play as decided by the offense. If an Illegal Pitch and Encroachment occur on the same play, the penalty for Encroachment will supersede the penalty for the Illegal Pitch (see Encroachment, below)

**Catcher:** The catcher is the only defensive player allowed to line up in foul territory, and in front of the encroachment line. The catcher must remain at least an arm's length away from, and behind or to the side of, the kicker until the moment the ball is kicked, or Encroachment will be called, provided the kicker lines up in the catcher's box. If the catcher lines up to the side of the kicker they still must remain behind the back plane of the kicker's body. Should the kicker line up behind the catcher's box, the catcher may line up at the back line of the catcher's box, but still needs to be positioned so that they do not impede the kicker's path to the pitched ball. As well, if the catcher does not pass through both the front set and the back set of cones in the catcher's box, and only if they are the first fielder to touch the ball in fair territory, they will be called for encroachment, and regular encroachment rules apply.

At no time may the catcher interfere with the kicker in the area between home plate and the backstop or cones before the ball is kicked. After the ball is kicked the standard obstruction and interference rules apply. Only one catcher may play for a team at a time. If the defense only has 8 players, they can choose to not have a catcher.

**Fielder:** All other defensive players in the field may position themselves however they wish in fair territory, provided that they start and stay behind the imaginary line between 1<sup>st</sup> base and 3<sup>rd</sup> base until the ball is kicked. Failure to do so results in an Encroachment call.

**Encroachment:** If any defensive player is called for encroachment, the referee will raise their hand silently. Encroachment shall *only* be called at the conclusion of the play. Encroachment shall only be called if the kicker makes contact with the ball. (Excluding when the ball hits the kicker above the waist, resulting in either a strike or a ball). First offense: kicker given choice of result of the play or a ball. All following offenses: kicker given choice of result of the play or first base. The kicker must contact the ball for an encroachment violation to take place. Encroachment calls are issued and aggregated to entire teams, not individual players.

**Exception:**

If a Kicker makes a backwards or sideways movement, that the ref deems intentional to initiate contact in an attempt to draw a Catcher Encroachment call, the Kicker will be given a single warning for Catcher Inducement, and the Fielding Team may opt to be awarded a strike in the count or the result of the play. If that same Kicker repeats the Catcher Inducement violation, that Kicker shall be called out.

## **Offense: Kicker, Runner, Pinch Runner, Base Coaches, Subs and The Official Scoresheets**

**The Kicker:** When a player's name is next in the kicking order, they become the kicker and step up to the plate to kick. Each player of the offensive team shall kick in the order that their name appears in their team's kicking order. The kicking order shall be followed throughout the game. If a player kicks out of turn, then the skipped player shall be out. The first kicker in each inning after the first inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last player who legally completed their time kicking in the preceding inning. A kicker has legally completed their time kicking when they are put out or becomes a runner. The kicker becomes a runner when they kick a fair ball. While the kicker does not need to start in the catcher's box, they may only kick the ball while they currently have part of their plant foot in the box or their last point of contact with the ground was legally in the box. Also, any part of the kicker's plant foot must not cross the front of the catcher's box. Failure to either of these will result in a foul ball if the kicker makes contact with the ball.

When the kicker is running towards 1st base they may run through that base, and as long as they stay in foul territory and/or do not make an attempt towards second, they are protected and may return to first base. 1st is the *only* base the runner may overrun. If a kicker kicks a ball that is fair but contacts a foreign object or a player from another game in the outfield, the result is a dead ball – ground rule double. If the kicker is past 2<sup>nd</sup> at the time contact with an object is made they get the base they are pursuing.

**The Runner:** A runner acquires the right to an unoccupied base when they touch it before they are out. They are then entitled to it until they are put out or forced to vacate it for another runner legally entitled to that base.

In terms of 1st base, the kicker should run through only the base in foul territory. If they are attempting a multi-base kick, they may round 1st using the base in fair territory. The defensive team may only make outs using the base in fair territory. If the runner uses the base in fair territory, they are considered to be pursuing 2<sup>nd</sup> and may be tagged out even if they immediately move into foul territory.

A runner may not leave their base until the ball is kicked by the kicker. If a runner is ruled to have left base early, the runner will be ruled out for **Leading Off. They will be called out and the ref will immediately call a dead ball.**

The runner may also not leave their base before first touch on a catch. If they leave early in this case, they need to **Tag Up**- return to touch the base from which they began or they will risk being called out. However, it is the responsibility of the defense to

appeal for such an out by, after the play has been called dead, bringing the ball to the base that the runner supposedly left early and asking for the out. At that time the referee will then make a ruling as to whether the runner left the base early or not. Although the out is recorded during a dead ball situation, if the referee rules the runner left early and is out on appeal, runs resulting from the play **do not count** if the out was the third of the inning.

Two runners may not occupy a base, but if two runners are touching a base, the following runner shall be out when tagged. The lead runner is entitled to the base. However, if two runners are occupying a base in a force-out situation where the lead runner is required to leave the base, the lead runner shall be out if tagged.

A runner may not advance when the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitcher's mound area and is not actively making a play. When the pitcher so ends the play, the ball is dead, and the runner(s) must go to the base that they are nearest to (unless occupied) at the time the play is ended. This does not apply to any runner who has not yet reached their force base, as any runner has the right to attempt the base to which they are forced even if the pitcher controls the ball on the mound.

Each runner including the kicker may, without liability to be put out, advance to home base, scoring a run, if a fair ball goes out of the playing field in flight and they touched all bases legally. If a runner fails to make contact with a base and proceeds to any later base, they may be called out. It is the defense's responsibility, in that case, to bring the ball to that base in appeal. If the referee agrees that the runner did not touch that base, then they will be called out.

Runners may slide head-first or feet-first into a base or home plate but must consider the safety of others while sliding. Runners who engage in a dangerous slide, including but not limited to attempting to "break-up" the play by means of the slide or sliding with raised cleats, shall be ruled out. In addition, as dangerous slides are considered unsportsmanlike conduct, the offending runner may also be subject to a yellow or red card, at the discretion of the referee.

A **Pinch Runner** can only be used for a runner who is already on base, and only in the instance that an injury necessitates the need for a replacement runner. The pinch runner must be the last available player of the same gender in the lineup.

The offensive team may station two **Base Coaches** in foul territory during its turn kicking, one near first base and one near third base. The coach cannot interfere with the play in any manner. If the base coach intentionally interferes with the play, the coach shall receive a card, be prohibited from acting as base coach for the remainder of the game, and the ref may issue a do-over or require players to return to appropriate bases.



**Subs-** If a team is short players, they may borrow from other teams' players in good standing, up to the minimum required to avoid forfeit [**i.e., 3 males and 3 females**]. If a team's minimum gender requirements are met but the team still has less than 9 players, a team may add up to 4 subs so that it may field a team of up to 9 players, but no more. Short-handed teams will incur an automatic out if they use two subs. Teams using three subs will incur two automatic outs. Teams using four subs (the maximum allowed) will incur three automatic outs. If a team is incurring multiple automatic outs, the remaining out(s) will roll over to the next inning if the initial out(s) ends the inning. There is no penalty for one sub. If a player on the team arrives who is on the team using the sub, and this player is the same gender as the sub they take the place of the sub in the field (once the half inning is over) and in the lineup with the sub no longer being able to play. Penalties for outs will be reduced accordingly. Subs must be placed at the end of the lineup. If any players of the opposite gender arrive after the game starts, they shall be placed after the sub in the lineup. During each rotation through the lineup, a team is required to take the automatic Penalty Out(s) at the end of their lineup. The captain is responsible for reporting the name of the player the out will be taken after to the referee and is also responsible for taking the out at the correct time. If a team is using 3 or more subs, then the opposing captain may file a complaint with the ref if they deem too many "ringers" being used. The Ref will have the final decision on whether that 3rd and/or 4th sub be allowed to play.

**Gender Minimums** - A team unable to fill the gender requirement (four men and four women, maximum six men or six women (Non binary players may fill either role)) may be forced to forfeit by the opposing captain. There are no maximums or minimums for non-binary players. If the opposing captain chooses to allow the offending team to play, that team is forced to play with the minimums in the field of the complete gender and take an out or out(s) at the end of their lineup as penalty. A team with less than three women available will be forced to play with only four men in the field and vice-versa along with any non-binary players on the team.

Example (A): Team A has only two (2) women available for the game and are unable to find subs. Team B chooses to allow play to go on. Team A must play with only four (4) men in the field along with their two (2) women and take an out at the end of their lineup.

Example (B): Team A has only two (2) women available for the game and one (1) nonbinary player and are unable to find subs. Team B chooses to allow play to go on. Team A must play with only four (4) men in the field along with their two (2) women and one (1) non-binary player and take an out at the end of their lineup.

**Changed penalty for not meeting gender minimum to allow teams to play with 9 players as long as both captains agree prior the start of the game. Both teams will be required to sign each other's scoresheets as evidence of the agreement. Teams will still be required to take an out at the bottom of their**

respective kicking lineups for each person short, but that penalty can also be waived if the opposing captains choose.

i.e. if team has 3 of any gender they would take 1 out. 2 of any gender they would take 2 outs. 1 of any gender they would take 3 outs.

**Weighted Games Rankings** - At the end of the regular season, four groups of four teams each will be formed based on the season standings. These four groups will be the teams ranked #1-4, #5-8, #9-12 and #13-16. While the three weighted games are being played, teams can only move up or down within their group. For example, a team finishing the regular season ranked #6 will play the #5, #7, and #8 teams in the weighted games but cannot jump into the #4 seed nor fall to the #9 seed for the tournament regardless of the weighted games outcome. (Note: In the 2022 season the standings reset to zero going into the weighted games, that is no longer the case.)

**Tournament Subs** - Only players that have participated in 8 games are eligible for tournament play (exceptions may be approved by the board). All teams have a roster of 21 players and all players wishing to play in the tournament must be in good standing with the league and listed on an appropriate roster. Rosters will lock with seven games remaining in the season.

EXCEPTIONS WILL ONLY BE MADE FOR EXTREME CASES AND BY THE VOTE OF THE BOARD SO CAPTAINS ARE REQUIRED TO PLAN ACCORDINGLY. IF A CAPTAIN BELIEVES THAT A PLAYER WILL MISS THE TOURNAMENT, THE REPLACEMENT MUST BE LISTED ON THEIR ROSTER.

**The Official Scoresheet**- Each team is responsible for keeping truthful and accurate scores for their game. Score sheets will be provided by the league at the beginning of the season, and instruction will be provided by request so that every team will be able to accurately fill out a score sheet to properly reflect score, outs, innings, cards, and home runs. The captain will be responsible for showing the score sheet to the ref at the beginning of the game if requested. In addition, upon the completion of the game the completed score sheets will need to be submitted physically or electronically to either ref coordinator in a timely manner by the ref. Captains still need to submit scoresheets, but in a reasonable timeframe.

### **The Referee**

OKC will schedule a team, which will select two people to referee each game: a Home Plate Ref and a Field Ref

Only the captain of a team may question the Referee.

Players are encouraged to get rule clarification from the Referee when play is dead (preferably between innings).

The decisions of the referees are final. However, in the event that the player knows that the referees' call was incorrect **in their favor** (i.e., the ball grazed the runner between bases, but the referees didn't realize it and called the runner safe), players are expected to correct the referees' mistake.

A **Do-Over** may be called only by the referees in the instance that they disagree on a call or feel as though there is sufficient ambiguity about what the right call should be. In a do-over situation all runners shall return to the base they were at, and the pitch count returns to what it was prior to the do-over.

## **Warnings, Yellow and Red Cards**

Referees and OKC Board Members have the authority and expectation to issue warnings, yellow, or red cards to players or spectators for unsportsmanlike or dangerous behavior. If necessary, it's ok to proceed directly to yellow and/or red card if the behavior justifies it.

Referees shall stop the game for all red and yellow card infractions.

Red and Yellow cards may be issued without warning or previous citation.

Any yellow or red cards issued in a game should be noted on the score sheet after the game so the cards can be documented by the OKC Board.

### **Levels of Penalties**

- **Warning:** No penalty, but if behavior is repeated, result should be red or yellow card issuance
- **Yellow Card:** Offending player shall sit a full inning- the remainder of the current half inning and the next half inning. The team may not replace the player defensively or offensively during the sitting inning. The offending player's team will take an out during the next offensive inning they are to play. Defensively, the offending player's team can play with no more than 9 players in the field. If the yellow card is issued to an offensive player during the last offensive half inning of a game, that player's team will take an additional out immediately and will not have to serve any additional offensive penalties should the game go into extra innings. Furthermore, if the yellow card is issued to a defensive player during the last defensive half inning of a game, that player's team will play with only 8 players in the field for the remainder of the inning and will not have to serve any additional defensive penalties should the game go into extra innings.
- **Red Card:** Immediate ejection from the current game and, based upon the decision of the OKC board, subsequent games. Players who receive a red card

may not attend their team's next match unless given specific exemption from the OKC Board. All Red Card suspensions may be reviewed by the OKC Board, who may adjust the terms and duration of suspensions at their discretion.

If a player receives two yellow cards in the same game, that will result in a red card and immediate ejection.

### **Cards and Gender Minimums**

If player ineligibility due to card receipt causes a team to become unable to meet minimum gender requirements, the team shall play down per Additional Red Card Penalties. Meaning they will have to take an out at the end of their lineup.

### **Cards and End of Season Tournament**

A player receiving a red card in the last match of the regular season is ejected in that game and is ineligible for the first game/round of the end of season tournament; a player ejected from the last game of the tournament is not eligible to play in the first game of the next season for which the player is registered.

A player receiving a red card in the end of season tournament will be ineligible for all remaining games; their team will be forced to play short during the game in question and the next game.

### **Automatic Card Situations**

- Unsportsmanlike Communication with Opponent
- Any and all negative communication directed toward the opposing team or the referee. This may include verbal and non-verbal communication (foul or abusive language, arguing, questioning, pointing, flipping the bird, etc.)

Kicking, throwing or tampering with the ball during an active game. This may include kicking or throwing the ball out of play deliberately, popping or purposely modifying the ball.

## **Section Four: Playing the Game**

A standard game consists of 7 innings of play, but may be shorter due to time, weather, or environmental constraints. An inning shall not be started after 55 minutes of play.

No team may score more than 8 runs in an inning. If a team scores 8 runs, then their half of the inning is over. The only exception to this is if it's the final inning; in the final inning teams do not have an 8 run cap.

All players must play both offense and defense in a game. All players in the kicking lineup must play at least one inning in the field on defense, and all defensive players in the field must be similarly written in the kicking order and must kick.

Tie games may stand in regular season play. Play-off games must end in a clear winner and will involve more than 7 innings if necessary. In such a situation, after the 7th inning, the winner is the team that has the higher score at the end of any additional complete inning. After the end of the 7th inning, each team on their offensive half of the inning shall start with the final kicker from the previous inning on second base.

A **Called Game** is one in which, for any reason, the head referee terminates play. The game may be called off early in the case of forfeit or the referee's discretion (lack of sun, inclement weather, etc.). In the case of a called game, 4 innings of play must have been completed to count in standings.

A game may be forfeited to the opposing team when a team fails to produce the required number and gender of duly registered players by 5 minutes after the scheduled start time or a team falls below the required minimum number/gender requirements due to the issue of a red card.

In the interests of mercy, no team shall be awarded more than a 10-run differential for any game for the purposes of rankings, regardless of the final score, (e.g., a team that wins by 23 points will be awarded a 10-point run differential).

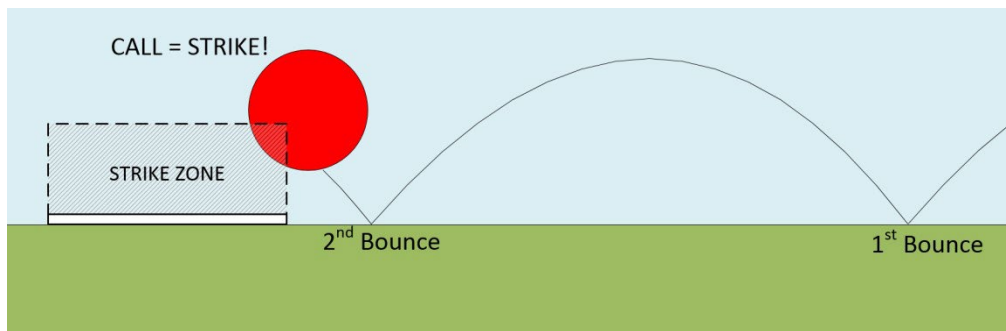
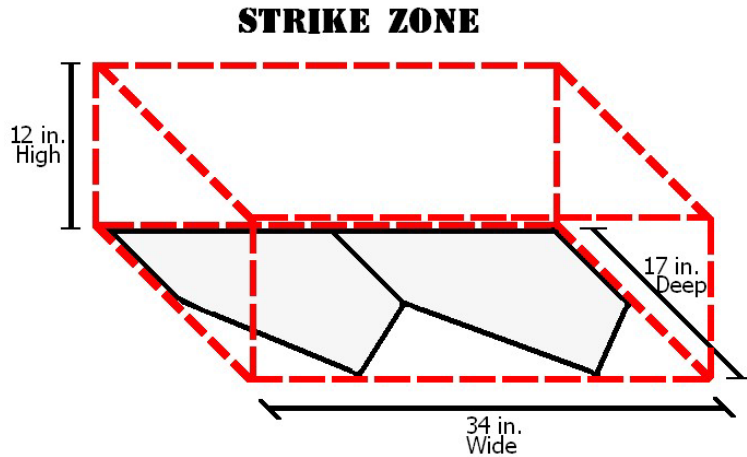
Forfeited games will be counted as a 5-0 game, (+5/-5 points)

At the time set for beginning the game the referee shall call "Play Ball" to indicate the beginning of the game, at which time the pitcher shall pitch to the kicker.

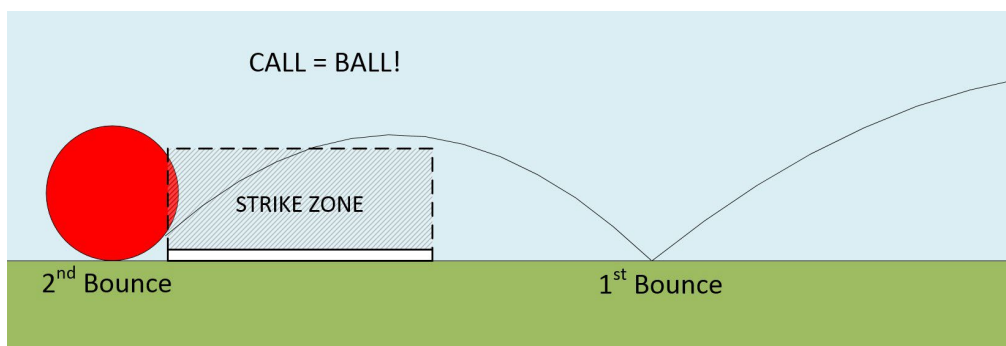
At the beginning of the game, the pitcher shall deliver the pitch to the kicker who may elect whether or not to attempt to kick the ball, as they choose. If the kicker does not kick the ball, either a strike or a ball will be called.

**Strike:** A pitch that either is kicked at by the kicker and is missed; or is not kicked at, if any part of the ball passes through any part of the strike zone and it bounces at least twice before exiting the strike zone. The kicker is out once he receives two strikes in the same appearance at the plate.

The **Strike Zone** (see diagram below) is two home plates wide and one foot above each plate. If any part of the ball crosses through this area and has bounced at least twice before exiting the strike zone, it is a strike. The back of the strike zone is considered to be an imaginary line that connects the farthest back tip of the plates, extending to the outer most edge on the side of each plate.



**Ball:** A pitch that does not bounce on the ground at least twice before passing completely through the strike zone, or does not also pass through the strike zone, and is not kicked at by the kicker, or is any pitch that does not contact the ground at least once before reaching home plate, regardless of whether it hits the kicker. The kicker is awarded first base (a “**Walk**”) once the ball count advances to three balls.

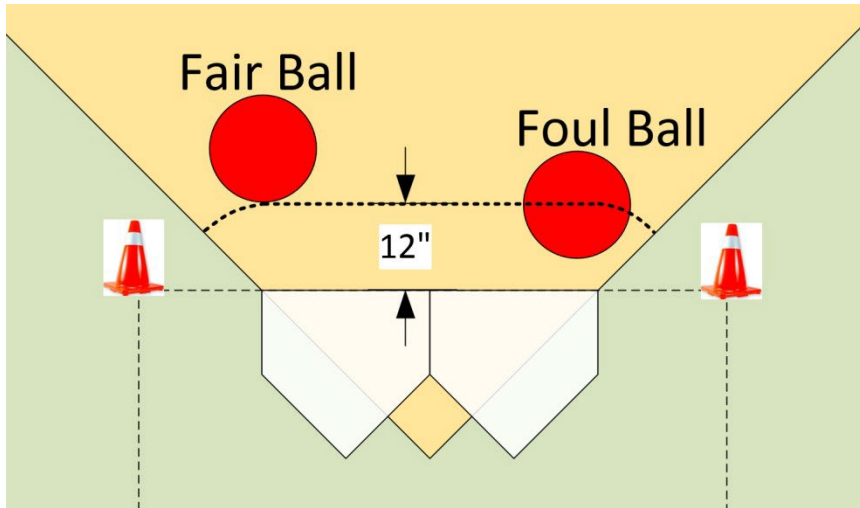


If the kicker does kick the ball, either a foul ball, safe, or out shall be called.

**Foul Ball:**

- A kicked ball that settles on foul territory before reaching first or third base.
- A kicked ball that first falls on foul territory beyond first or third base.

- A kicked ball that while on or over foul territory, touches the person of a referee or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
- **A ball kicked at or above the bend in the knee but below the waist.**
- A ball that's kicked outside of the catcher's box.
- A kick in which the kicker's plant foot crosses the front of the plate.
- A ball kicked twice in foul territory.
- A kicked ball that is fielded when the trailing edge of the ball is less than a foot (12 inches) in front of home plate.



Any ball that touches a kicker above the waist is not considered a foul and should be called either a ball or a strike. For the purpose of this rule, "above the waist" includes arms, heads, torsos or any portion of the body not the legs or feet regardless of whether the body part is elevated above the waist at the time of contact. The kicker is out once they foul three times in the same appearance at the plate. A runner may not advance on a foul ball, caught or otherwise.

**"Safe"** is a declaration by the referee that a runner is entitled to the base for which they were trying.

An **Out** is one of the three required retirements of an offensive team during its time kicking.

- Any ball kicked by the kicker that is caught except a foul ball that has first touched an inanimate object.
- A runner who fails to tag-up after a fair ball is caught before they, or their base, is tagged by a fielder.
- A runner not touching a base who is touched with the ball, unless hit in the head with a ball while standing upright.

**Exception:** A kicker runner cannot be tagged out after over-running or over sliding 1st base if they remained in foul territory at all times after touching the safety base and made no attempt to advance to second.

- A fielder who is in possession of the ball touching a base to which a runner is forced to run.
- A double-kicked ball where the second touch occurs in fair territory.
- A runner who passes another runner before the preceding runner is out.
- A runner who intentionally interferes with a defensive play.
- A runner who leaves the baseline in order to avoid being touched with the ball.
- A runner who leads off.

**Leading off** is when a runner leaves the base before the kicker makes contact with the ball. If a ref sees a runner leading off the ref should call a dead ball and call the runner out. If the runner is not the 3rd out the count remains unchanged, and the result of the pitch is ignored.

A **Force Out** is any runner that is caused to be out before they are safe at a base to which they are required to run. This is most commonly by the defense tagging a base but can also occur by a runner being tagged while running to a base, provided they are forced to run to that base because of the kicked ball. I.E., if a runner is on first base and the ball is kicked, they are *forced* to run to second- if they are tagged going to second base it counts as a force out. However, if a following runner is put out on a force play, the force is removed, and the runner must be tagged to be put out.

It is important to note that, for scoring purposes, if the third out occurs before a runner crosses home then that runner does not score. Similarly, if the runner does cross home plate but the third out occurs by a force out afterwards, then the run also does not score.

A **Catch** is the act of a fielder getting secure possession in their hand of a ball in flight and firmly holding it. A catch is legal if the ball is finally held by any fielder, even though juggled, touched or held by another fielder before it touches the ground. In the case of a catch, runners must **"Tag Up"** (stay in contact with the base they were on when the ball was kicked) until the ball is first touched by a defender but may leave their bases the instant the first fielder touches the ball.

**Dead Ball:** When the pitcher has control of the ball on the pitching mound (within the indicated area) the Home Plate Ref shall declare "time" and the play considered over. Any base runner that is judged to be more than halfway to the next base at the time the pitcher gains control of the ball in the pitcher's circle may advance to the next base. If the runner has failed to get halfway to the next base, the runner must return to the previous base. The next base is not automatic and is at the restriction of the runner. IF, prior to the "TIME" declaration from the referees, a pitcher that has control of the ball in



the pitcher's circle and decides to make a play on a base runner, the play shall not be considered dead, and the base runners can advance at their own discretion.

**Overthrow:** An overthrow occurs when a defensive player kicks or throws the ball that passes the foul line while between home plate and either overthrow cone and then travels beyond the overthrow line.

The result of an overthrow is a dead ball and the runner is allowed the base they are pursuing. If the runner is returning to the base they had just come from (on a caught ball) they get that base, and if they are heading towards a base (including just standing still on a base) they get that next base. If a runner has not yet reached a base by the time an overthrow is called, runners behind them cannot advance.

**Example:** A throw is made to first and is errant, going out of play. At the moment the ball goes ten feet into foul territory the kicker has reached first base but the runner that was on first has not yet reached second. Ordinarily the kicker would also be able to take second because of the overthrow but because the runner from first has not reached second, they cannot advance, so the kicker may not in this scenario advance to second.

If a ball is kicked by the kicker and bounces off a runner, it does not count as an overthrow if it goes ten feet out of play. As long as it has not touched an object out of play, the ball is still live.

### **Obstruction**

Fielders must not impede the progress of the runner. Fielders must stay out of the baseline unless they are actively making a play on the ball. Any defensive player determined to have illegally impeded progress of the runner shall be called for Obstruction and their entire team will receive a warning. Each subsequent infraction for Obstruction will be penalized with a yellow card for the offending player. If the referee rules that a fielder obstructed a base, the runner shall be awarded any base they would have attained. An example of this would be if a runner is obstructed at second base, but then is called out on a close play at home, the runner may be awarded home because if they had not been obstructed at second, it could be assumed that they would have easily gotten home. The ref shall have discretion to award any additional base that the ref believes the runner would have (not could have) been able to reach but for the obstruction.

**Interference** is an act by the kicking team that intentionally interferes with, obstructs, impedes, or hinders any fielder attempting to make a play, either during a live play or after the kicker/runner has been declared out. If the referee declares interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the referee,

legally touched at the time of the interference, and the offending player shall be called out (and if the offending player was already out, the ref may call other outs as warranted). Interference that is considered to be intentional may also warrant a yellow or red card, at the discretion of the referee.