



OFFICIAL RULE BOOK

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Adapted from:

*the United Sports Kickball Rules published 06/2018
&
the Gay Kickball USA (GKUSA) rulebook published 4/17/2019*

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I League Participation

The League will be open to all interested persons who wish to engage in kickball as a way to celebrate diversity, promote awareness, and encourage acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community in Sarasota and the surrounding areas.

League activities will be governed by SRQ Kickball LLC's bylaws and by the decisions and activities of its Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors will be responsible for setting procedures and rules relating to the composition of teams, game schedules, and any other matter relating to the League.

Each Director, volunteer, team captain, staff person, contractor, and other person with league responsibility or who represents the league shall be required to submit to a formal interview and screening process as established by the Board of Directors, and to pass a background check pursuant to their sexual predator and sexual offender status to comply with Florida Statutes Section 943.04351. Records of the results of the interview, screening, and background check will be retained by the League and will be provided upon request to any authorized representative of a governmental subdivision or organization at whose facilities the League will play.

II Field Dimensions & Set Up

1. Like baseball, playing infield is diamond—shaped with equal angles (90° angle) and sides measuring sixty feet (60') with a base located at each corner. When measuring the distance between Home Plate and/or each Base, place measuring tape at back corner of Home Plate and/or each Base and then measure from that point, placing the base at the appropriate 60' location.
2. The pitcher's mound is placed in the center of the playing infield along the 1st Base and 3rd Base diagonal. The exact measurement is 42.5 inches.
3. **Kicker's Box:** This area is a rectangular space where the front of the box aligns with the front of the home plate. It encompasses 3 feet (36 inches) in width (the same width as the strike zone) and is 5 feet deep.
4. **Strike Zone:** this area is a **three-dimensional rectangular prism** based on the home plate and extends 1 foot to its left and right sides (approx. 36 inches in total). The strike zone is 12 inches in height, extends 1 foot to either side of the home plate. It will be marked with two orange square plates to show the outer bounds of the strike zone.
 - 4.1. The orange "guide plates" are not part of the strike zone. See *X-Strikes*.
5. After notifying the Umpire of any improper field set up, the field layout shall be corrected before the beginning of next play.
 - 5.1. However, if the improper set up was to the advantage of one team for a whole half inning, it is to the umpire's discretion if the incorrect layout will be correct at the beginning of the top of the next inning.
6. A safety base must be placed next to 1st Base in foul territory.
7. While every attempt will be made to conform to field dimensions and composition as stated above, field availability may necessitate variances.

III Equipment

- 1) Shoes: Without exceptions, players are required to wear close-toed shoes at all times.
- 2) Players are NOT permitted to wear metal cleats, studs or any shoes that contain metal.
- 3) Standard 10" diameter kickballs shall be used.

IV Game Participants

- 1) In order to play in the SRQ Kickball League, a participant must:
 - a) Be at least 18 years of age
 - b) Adequately and currently health insured against all injury that may arise during game play
 - c) Sign the liability waiver
- 2) Failure to comply with above will result in the following:
 - a) Person will be removed promptly.
 - b) Team will forfeit.
- 3) Players may only be registered to one team.
- 4) A home base umpire assigned by the board of directors has the authority to make all final calls during the game. This individual has the power to stop play, make final game play decisions, and may penalize players with yellow and red cards for unsportsmanlike behavior.
 - a) Only a member of the board of directors not involved in game play may overrule an umpire.

V Teams

- 1) Teams must have a minimum of 8 people fielded. Unless an injury or a team member leaves during the game, the team may play less than 8 people. If the game has been started, a substitute may not enter the game, the team must play with whatever team members are available.
- 2) Team selection and composition will be decided by the board of directors.
- 3) Each team must field at least 8 players in order to avoid a forfeit. Teams may have a maximum of 10 players on the field at any time.
- 4) The fielding team must assign and field 1 pitcher and 1 catcher in an inning during the game. These positions may not change in the middle of an inning unless the team follows the substitution rules outlined in XV, *Injury & Substitutions*.
- 5) The fielding team is allowed a **maximum** of 6 infielders (including the pitcher and catcher). However, once a ball is kicked, all fielders may move around the field as they please.
- 6) Only the captain may dispute a **call** for rule infractions with the Umpire but must do so (1) respectfully and (2) accept the final umpire's ruling.
- 7) **Players who are not the captain MAY NOT talk to any umpire or will be subject to a yellow or red card.**

- 8) All participating players MUST kick in the written kicking order. Teams are responsible for keeping track of the kicking order. All players present and on the official roster of the team must kick.
- 9) SRQ Kickball League tournaments do not allow for “pinch runners.”
- 10) Once a pitch is released from the mound, any umpire may officially make the call of “improper kicking order.” If a kicker is out of order, then the play is dead and the person who was in line to kick is out.
- 11) Any resulting play from an out of order kicker will be nullified.
- 12) Players that are not present at the beginning of the game are to be removed from the lineup and added last on the lineup once they arrive on the field. A player *may be added to the end of the lineup even if a team has already been through its kicking lineup.*
- 13) Up to two members may serve as base coaches, at 1st base and 3rd base. They may not interfere with the game or the umpires. Base coaches may not physically interfere with game play. Doing so results in an out and the play is dead. Umpires may also send back other runners to a prior base if they gained an unfair advantage.
 - a) **Game play interference is defined by (1) the physical touching of a player (2) DURING GAME PLAY (3) that substantially influences game play.**
 - b) **Only the following examples shall be called by umpires as an OUT**
 - i) During an active play, a base coach helps a runner maintain balance or helps prevent the runner from overrunning a base.
 - ii) During an active play, a base coach physically touches a runner during the play in order to alert the runner to advance to the next base.
 - iii) During an active play, a base coach physically touches the ball in order to influence the play.
 - iv) During an active play, a base coach actively obstructs a fielder from collecting the ball or making a play.
- 14) Unless a player is currently the kicker, a fielder or a runner, that individual must be in the dugout area or far away enough from the baselines so as to not interfere with the game or umpires' vision.

VI Regulation Games

- 1) Games will last for 50 minutes or 7 innings, whichever comes first. (NOTE) If the home team is losing at the conclusion of the 50 minute time limit or the top of the 7th inning the inning will continue (including playoff games).
- 2) The Home Team will finish kicking (unless the Home Team is winning, then the game may conclude at the half inning if in the top of the 7th).
- 3) Any team that is not ready to take the field within 10 minutes after the scheduled kick off time shall forfeit the match.
- 4) Teams can score a maximum of 8 runs per inning. If a team scores 8 runs in one inning before 3 outs, the game will move onto the next half-inning.
- 5) Teams can score unlimited runs in the 7th inning ONLY.

- 6) Forfeits will be recorded as a 10-0 score.
- 7) The team with the most runs at the end of the game wins.
- 8) During regular play, games that result in teams having an equal score will be recorded as a tie. During elimination rounds, tie games will go into the overtime rules provided in XVI – Elimination Round Extra Innings.
- 9) Any player caught purposely delaying the game is subject to a yellow or red card by the umpire.

VII Pitching, Catching & Fielding

- 1) Pitching must be underhand only.
- 2) No bouncing of the ball to the kicker higher than one foot (as measured from the bottom of the ball). If the ball is bouncing higher than 1 foot off the ground when it reaches the plate then it is a ball; however, the kicker does have the option of kicking it if he/she/they wishes.
- 3) The pitcher must stay inside the pitching area on the mound until the ball is kicked. If the pitcher crosses outside the pitching area, an illegal pitch will be called. The kicker does have the option of kicking it if he/she/they so chooses, and takes the result of that play.
- 4) Catcher must line up at least 3 feet behind or parallel to the Kicker when play starts. Catcher may not cross Home Plate to field the ball nor be positioned forward of the Kicker at any point before the ball is kicked. In addition, Catcher is not permitted to come into contact with the Kicker nor position so closely to the Kicker as to restrict kicking motion.
- 5) Except for the catcher, all infielders must start in fair territory. Infielders may choose to follow the ball after it is pitched but must stay in line or behind the pitcher.
- 6) All infielders must remain at or behind the base (or baseline) until the ball is kicked by the kicker.
- 7) All outfielders must remain in the outfield (grass) until the ball is kicked by the kicker.
- 8) All kicked balls are considered live balls. If a ball is kicked in foul territory and is caught, this is an out. If the ball is misplayed or dropped or touched in foul territory, this will be considered a foul ball.
- 9) There is NO INFIELD FLY RULE.

VIII Kicking

- 1) Each kicker must make all kicks by the foot or below the knee. Any ball touched by the foot or leg below the knee is considered a kick.
- 2) All kicks must be taken at or behind the home plate or a strike will be called.
 - a) If the ball is kicked in front of home plate and the kick is caught 'out' by a fielder (or a force out occurs), the kicker is out.
- 3) Kickers may not stop the ball with their foot and then kick it.
- 4) "Bunting" is permitted.
- 5) Intentional fouls are permitted.

IX Running and Scoring

- 1) Runners must stay within the baseline. Fielders must stay out of the baseline unless they are attempting to tag the runner or catch the kicked ball.
- 2) Fielders trying to make an out on base may have their foot on the base (except for first), but must lean out of the baseline.
- 3) If a fielder attempts to physically obstruct a runner from advancing, the runner may advance as many bases as they would have potentially earned had they been able to run unobstructed. This is a judgment call by the official.
- 4) It is the responsibility of the runner to avoid a collision.
- 5) All ties go to the runner.
- 6) Pursuant to the ASA Rule, when a defensive player has the ball and the runner remains upright and crashes into the defensive player, it is considered a "crash". If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected.
- 7) Hitting a runner with the ball above the shoulder level is not allowed and the runner is safe and advances one (1) base except for the following situations:
 - a) If the runner intentionally uses their head the runner is out.
 - b) If the runner is ducking, diving or sliding (i.e. attempting to dodge the ball) and is hit in the head because of this, it is an out.
 - c) If the runner intentionally hits or kicks the ball out of bounds after being tagged out, the ball is dead and all runners must return to their original bases.
- 8) When two runners are on the same base at the same time, the fielder has the choice of tagging either runner with the ball. The runner who is tagged is out and the other runner is safe and may stay on the base.
- 9) Runners traveling from Home Plate may overrun 1st Base and may only be tagged out if actively and intentionally attempting to advance to 2nd Base. An idle left turn where the Runner returns directly to 1st base does not constitute an active attempt to advance. It must be a deliberate move towards advancing to 2nd Base.
- 10) In order to score a run, runners must touch the physical SAFETY HOME BASE/PLATE. If a player fails to touch the safety home plate then the runner is NOT safe.
- 11) Running past another runner is not allowed. The runner that has been passed (i.e. lapped) is out.
- 12) The "safety base / double base" must be used when the Kicker is traveling to First (1st) Base from Home Plate AND when running from third to home, the safety home base/plate MUST be used, or the runner is OUT.
 - a) Safety base is ONLY available for runners traveling to or from home plate. No additional base may be used at any other base
 - b) Fielders trying to make an out at 1st Base must touch the base in fair territory (the official 1st base). Runners hindered by a fielder touching the Safety Base will be Safe.
- 13) Runners are not permitted to lead off base nor steal bases. Runners may advance once the ball is kicked. A runner who is off the base when the ball is kicked is OUT.
- 14) To "tag up" is a requirement for base runners to retouch or remain on their starting base until a fielder makes initial contact with the ball (i.e. tagging up is based on the touch, not catch).
 - a) Runners are required to tag up when a ball that has not touched the ground is caught by a fielder, regardless if it is a catch within fair territory or a catch from a "live foul."
 - b) Runners are free to attempt to advance at their own risk after a legal tag up even if the ball was caught in foul territory.
 - c) A runner failing to tag up as required is an OUT.
 - d) Tagging Up is NOT a forced situation (i.e. a force out).
- 15) A run counts when a runner touches home plate before the 3rd out is made, EXCEPT that no run counts when the 3rd out is made during a forced situation, or when the kicker is put out before touching 1st base.
- 16) Overthrows: An overthrow is a ball thrown, kicked, or deflected into foul territory while making a defensive play toward a Player or base.

- a) Overthrows only apply at first base. When an overthrow made in the direction of 1st Base is made, ALL runners may only advance ONE base.

X Strikes

- 1) A count of 3 strikes is an out. Foul balls are not considered to be strikes.
- 2) A strike is a pitch that is not kicked and is not called ball in accordance with Rule XI-2 and where any part of the ball enters the strike zone herein. "Any part of the pitched ball" means that even the slightest amount of the ball entering the strike zone as defined by Rule II-4, Strike Zone.
- 3) A strike is also an attempted kick missed by the kicker inside or outside of the strike zone.

XI Balls

- 1) A count of 4 balls advances the kicker to 1st base.
- 2) A "ball" is any of the following when a kick *is not attempted*:
 - a) a pitch outside of the strike zone (see II-4).
 - i) It is NOT a ball simply because part of the ball is touching one of the orange plates on the side of home plate.
 - b) A pitched ball that does not touch the ground at least twice or roll before reaching home plate.
 - i) If the ball bounces for a second time in the strike zone, it is NOT a ball; it is a strike.
 - c) A pitched ball that exceeds 12 inches in height at the bottom for the entirety of time while passing over the strike zone (Rule II-4, Strike Zone)

XII Fair and Foul Balls

- 1) A foul is:
 - a) A kick landing out of bounds.
 - b) A kick landing in bounds, but traveling out of bounds on its own before reaching first or third base (any ball touching a fielder in fair territory is automatically in play).
 - c) A kicked ball touched more than once or stopped in the kicking box by the kicker.
- 2) A count of 4 fouls is an out.
- 3) Foul lines are considered fair territory.

XIII Outs

- 1) A count of 3 outs by a team completes the team's half of the inning.
- 2) An "out" occurs when
 - a) kicking count is three (3) strikes or four (4) fouls;
 - b) any kicked ball (fair or foul) is caught by a Fielder;
 - c) a forced out by ball tag at the base to which a Runner is running prior to the Runner

- arriving at that base;
- d) a Runner is touched by the ball at any time while not on base while ball is still in play
 - i) However, a runner is NOT OUT if a fielder throws the ball and it hits the runner above the shoulders on the first point of contact (i.e. the neck or head)
 - (1) This exception does not apply when the runner dives or slides; in this instance, the runner is OUT.
- e) a Runner is tagged by the ball on base when the Runner fails to tag-up as required when a ball is caught;
- f) a Runner is off base when the ball is kicked (i.e. leading off);
- g) a Kicker does not kick in the proper kicking line up;
- h) a Runner passes another Runner;
- i) a Runner runs outside of the baseline;
- j) a Runner who misses a base but fails to tag up, as called by a Referee upon the conclusion of the play;
- k) a Runner who fails to properly tag up on a caught ball (i.e. tagging up is based on when a fielder first comes into contact with the ball);
- l) a Runner tagged by the ball while on a base they are forced to vacate by the Kicker becoming a Runner;
- m) a double kick where the second contact made by the kicker with the ball is outside of the kicker's box results.

XIV Ball in Play

- 1) Play ends when the pitcher is in possession of the ball **on** the pitchers mound. The PITCHER'S MOUND is the set plate or strip marked by officials who have set up the field.
 - a) Runners who are off the base must return if they are not at least halfway to the next base.
 - b) Runners who are past the halfway point toward the base may safely advance to the base.
 - c) Once a Pitcher has ended play, the play is DEAD and all remaining runners are safe on their respective bases.
- 2) Interference:
 - a) **By Fielder:** When Runner is hindered by any Fielder within the baseline or standing on the base – not making an active play for the ball – the Runner shall be safe at the base to which they were running. Runners may choose to advance beyond this base while the ball is still in play.
 - b) **By Runner:** When Runner physically hinders Fielder attempting to make a play in a deliberate and unsportsmanlike manner, the interference causes the play to end, the Runner is out, and other Runners must go back unless forced forward.
 - c) **By Runner Who Touches Ball:** When any Runner (on or off base) intentionally touches a ball, the interference causes the play to end, the Runner to be out, and any other Runners shall return to the base from which they came, unless forced to advance.
 - d) **By Non-Permanent Object:** When any non--Fielder or non--permanent object – except an Umpire, Referee or Runner – touches or is touched by a ball in play in fair territory, the interference causes the play to end and Runners shall proceed to the base to which they were headed.

- e) **By Player on Opposite Field:** When a Player from the game on the opposite playing field (1) touches the ball and the interference gives either Team an unfair advantage OR (2) deliberately and intentionally hinders a fielder to prevent a play (not mere incidental contact) and the interference gives the Kicking Team an unfair advantage – so much so that play should cease due to fairness and sportsmanship. This interference causes play to end. The Umpire has the ultimate discretion to determine whether interference occurred and the location of base--Runner(s) but--for the interference. However, the Umpire may not advance the Runner(s) greater than to the base they were headed.
- f) **Interference by Non-fielding Players:** When non--fielding players (such as supporters, spectators, bystanders, etc.) significantly hinder or prevent a Fielder from retrieving a ball in foul territory – so much so that play should cease due to fairness and sportsmanship, this interference causes play to end. The Umpire has the ultimate discretion to determine the location of base--Runner(s) but--for the interference. However, the Umpire may not advance the Runner(s) greater than to the base they were headed
- g) If a ball is popped or deflates significantly, that play shall be replayed with a properly inflated ball.

XV Injury & Substitutions

- 1) The Captain is ONLY permitted to make the following substitutions during the middle of an inning:
 - a) The captain may substitute the pitcher with either someone from the dugout or a current fielder. However, the switch can only happen when the count is 0-0-0 on a kicker (i.e., if there has been at least one pitch to a current kicker, the substitution cannot take place until the next kicker is at bat).
 - b) May occur at any time to replace an injured or ill player. However, if someone is replaced due to an injury, if that player *is to return to the game, the participant must be placed in the same spot in the kicking lineup.*
 - c) The clock continues while the substitution occurs. *However, if it appears that players are purposely delaying the game, players will be subject to a yellow or red card.*
- 2) If a player is ejected, injured, becomes ill or leaves the game early, the kicking order will remain the same less the removed player. *Injured players who do not kick CANNOT play in the game.*
- 3) If a kicker is injured before reaching or being able to reach 1st Base, then the kicker is OUT.
 - a) If a kicker is safe to first, then he/she/they may be replaced by the person who was last up/out.
- 4) All substitutes must play in an outfield position unless the player is registered as a league-substitute. If the player is registered as a league-substitute, the player is eligible to play any position except pitcher or catcher.
 - a) Teams cannot have more than three (3) substitutes per game during the regular season
 - b) If injury occurs, then team plays with remaining count, even if below eight (8)
 - c) Teams must first attempt to reach out to league-registered substitutes
 - d) Teams must play all non-injured players from team before using a substitute

XVI Elimination Round Extra Innings

- 1) Extra Innings only occur in elimination rounds.
- 2) For extra innings, the last person to have kicked the prior inning will start on 2nd Base.
- 3) Each kicker will start with a full count (2 strikes, 3 fouls, 3 balls) and only get 1 pitch.
 - a) A strike or foul is an out.
 - b) A ball is a walk.
 - c) A ball kicked into fair territory results in regular play.
- 4) Teams play with 3 outs as usual.
- 5) Teams will continue to play extra innings until one team has more runs at the end of an inning.

XVII Sportsmanship

- 1) Though games are often competitive, ensuring participant safety and providing a comfortable LGBTQI+ atmosphere is of utmost importance to SRQ Kickball League. Proper sportsmanship is subjective and should be viewed as how a reasonable person would interpret the behavior in a game. However, certain instances are inherently unacceptable, and the SRQ Kickball League Board of Directors will exercise zero tolerance when handling these situations.
- 2) There is a zero tolerance policy for the following behaviors:
 - a) Public drunkenness
 - b) Physical violence or threats of violence
 - c) Excessive swearing or swearing of any kind toward any umpires or opposing players
 - d) Discriminatory comments
 - e) Name calling
 - f) Sexual harassment or inappropriate touching of any other individual
 - g) Creation of any conditions of an unsafe environment
 - h) Bullying of any kind
- 3) *The umpire has the discretion to give players yellow or red cards for violations of the code of conduct or the rules of sportsmanship described herein.*
- 4) Captains are responsible for maintaining proper sportsmanlike behavior for their team.
- 5) In addition to penalties enumerated above, the SRQ Kickball League Board of Directors reserves the right to apply additional penalties as it sees fit.
 - a) **Yellow Cards:** Can be given as a direct punishment and serve as an official warning for unsportsmanlike behavior. Yellow cards **are cumulative**; players who have already received two yellow cards in prior games will be ejected from the game upon their third yellow card. *Players will also not be permitted to play the following game.*
 - b) **Red Cards:** Can be given as a direct punishment or are given to a player who has already received a yellow card earlier in the game.
 - i) Players receiving a red card are immediately ejected from the game. They are also not permitted to play the following game. Depending on the nature of the violation, the player may also be ejected from the tournament.
 - ii) Red Cards are **cumulative**: any player receiving 2 red cards during the session will be expelled from the league.

- c) **Ejections:** Players that are ejected from a game or sitting out from the game due to a prior yellow or red card penalty must immediately leave the park until they are allowed to play again.
 - i) *Any team that has a player fail to adhere to this rule will automatically forfeit the game.*
- 6) *All spectators, volunteers, guests, and other people in attendance are subject to the same rules herein.*
- 7) **Sportsmanlike Conduct at Affiliated Events:** the SRQ Kickball League Board of Directors reserves the right to eject or expel any players found to engaging in egregious conduct toward others (e.g., physical violence, bullying, sexual harassment or abuse).

XVIII Tournament Rankings for Elimination Round

- 1) A full annual season consists of both Spring session and Fall session. The sum of these games will be used to determine playoff rankings.
- 2) In order to determine rankings for the elimination brackets, the following system will be used:
 - a) A win is 3 points
 - b) A tie is 1 point.
 - c) A loss is 0 points.
- 3) After points are accumulated, if there are any ties in the rankings, the following tiebreakers will be used in order they are listed:
 - a) Team with more wins.
 - b) "Head to head" play
 - c) Team with less points scored against ("runs allowed")
 - d) Team with less yellow and red cards (yellow = 1, red = 3)
 - e) If not resolved, then by leadership coin toss