

KAYAK FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT RULES

OBJECT – 1) Be safe. 2) Have Fun. 3) Score more points than the opposing team by catching a football (or similar) over a goal line.

FIELD PLAYING SIZE – Indoor Olympic-sized swimming pool

PLAYERS – 5 players per team (Or less if you prefer; but only if you're able to hold your own against 5 people)

a. For teams with a blind/VI player (or players), one additional 'sighted' player will be allowed as a *guide* for each VI player.

1. Guides are only allowed to *assist* the VI player. They are not allowed to advance the ball in any way more than *handing* it to their guidee.

EQUIPMENT (Provided) – Some form of single-person kayak/canoe (doubles allowed in special circumstances)

- PFD's

- Helmets

- Paddles – (hand paddles *–not provided–* are allowed, though not recommended)

- Spray skirts *–optional–* (especially for newer participants who may be uncomfortable being in a boat)

- Ball – Different options available; See [before the game](#).

LENGTH OF GAME – Two halves of either 5 or 10 minutes. Clock stops when ball is not in play (See [Kickoff](#); ["Rule L"](#)) Total time per game: Apx. 20/40 minutes.

BEFORE THE GAME – Coin flip to determine who gets ball first. Kicking Team gets their choice of end zone to defend. **At this point, it should be determined:**

1. **If purposely flipping over an opponent is allowed.**** If both captains agree it IS allowed, any players without a roll (or, at the very least, anyone not extremely comfortable waiting for a bow rescue) need to be made somehow easily identifiable as an *unacceptable* targets. *****(This is currently still under review)***

2. If either captains/teams have a certain preference in game ball. This too, must be unanimous, otherwise, the default game ball will be used

GAME PLAY:

KICKOFF – Done at start of each half, and after each score.

a. Teams line up on opposite sides of the pool; Ideally, IN their respective End Zones (Or some other obvious reference point). Ball is thrown to Receiving Team

Example A. After a score: The team who was just scored upon;

Example B. Starting the second half: the team who did not receive the ball to begin the game].

b. Clock starts *once ball is thrown* for kickoff.

c. Ball must at least go past the half-court line or be 're-kicked'.

d. Ball is NOT LIVE until it is first touched by a player on the receiving team

1. If a player on Kicking Team touches the ball before their opponents, Receiving Team is given possession at the spot of the foul

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2. Intentional advancement of ball with a boat or paddle –by either team– is not allowed during this “dead ball period”.

ADVANCING THE BALL – Upon obtaining possession of the ball, a player has 5 seconds to advance it. **It is the responsibility of the opposing team to count aloud** these five seconds (1,001, 1,002, 1,003, etc.). The ball can only be advanced by: A) passing it, or B) dribbling.

- Passing: the intended receiver does not have to catch the ball (unless in End Zone). However, the first paddler to retrieve the ball has possession, regardless of their team.

- Dribbling: the entire ball must pass the end of the player’s boat (bow or stern), retrieved, and then repeated. Anytime the ball is not in a player’s possession, –while dribbling, upon being thrown, etc.– the opposing team may attempt to steal it.

If neither of these is done within the allotted time: See [Violations](#)

SCORING – A goal can *only* be scored by throwing the ball across the goal line and then being caught by a player of the same team. Each goal is worth one point.

A goal will still be VALID if:

- A player successfully catches the ball, flips over, then rolls up with the ball still in their possession, (while remaining in their boat).

- A player catches the ball, flips over, then is successfully rescued (T-Rescue, Hand of God, etc.), with the ball still in their possession.

INVALID GOALS/AUTOMATIC TURNOVER

a. If the Offense passes the ball over the defending team’s goal line & the ball is NOT successfully caught, a member of the defending team immediately takes possession of the ball in their End Zone. The ball is not live again until the ball carrier either passes or dribbles the ball out of the End Zone, back into the field of play. Additionally, the opposing team cannot target the ball carrier until he/she crosses the goal line.

Additionally, a Goal will NOT be valid if:

a. A player successfully catches the ball, flips over, then rolls up *without* the ball in their possession.

b. A player successfully catches the ball, flips over, but comes out of their boat without letting go of the ball

c. The ball is simply *handed* over the goal line from one player to another

d. If a player catches the ball and subsequently drifts across the goal line, the goal is *not valid*. **However, the ball is still live.**

1. In this position, the only way to score is for the ball to be *passed back out across the goal line*, and then scored like normal.

SAFETY/FAIRNESS RULES:

ALLOWED:

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- a. Blocking passes with the paddle
- b. Pushing off of an opponent's boat, but only by using your own body
- c. Ramming an opponent's boat, but not to "driving" an opponent (continuing to paddle after making contact with opponent's boat, so as to prevent them from moving)

NOT ALLOWED:

- d. **(STRICTLY ENFORCED)** NO TOUCHING OF ANY PLAYER WITH YOUR PADDLE (EVEN ACCIDENTALLY)
- e. Holding or pushing an opponent's boat with the paddle.
- f. Slapping (reaching) over another player or their boat with paddle to retrieve a *non-airborne* ball
- g. Throwing of paddles.
- h. Flipping an opponent **toward** your boat.
- i. Holding, grabbing, hooking, smothering, or similarly restraining an opponent or their equipment
 - 1. Always follow the "Open Hand Rule"
- j. Any active movement of the boat (paddling, steering, sculling, etc.) while holding the ball.
- k. Biting. You've heard the old saying before: "Every time you see a sign telling you not to do something obvious and stupid... it's there because somebody did just that"
- l. In the event a player flips, and is not able to immediately right themselves, **ALL GAME PLAY STOPS** until he/she is upright, and confirms they are 'okay;' then play resumes. (If you see this happening, *please* do the right thing and don't wait for a referee to stop play)
- m. In the event a non-roller gets flipped & a successful rescue is performed, the rescuing team takes possession of the ball at the site of the rescue, with both teams lined up facing each other

VIOLATION OF MISCELLANEOUS RULES OR BALL ADVANCEMENT – The non-fouling team obtains possession of the ball at the site of the infraction & both teams line up facing each other

- ⊗ **Repeated Safety Violations**, will result in a 5-minute (on the game clock) suspension of the offending player, leaving his/her team short-handed [i.e. Penalty Box in hockey]
This is at the SOLE discretion of the referee(s)