

# STONEWALL

# DODGEBALL

## Richmond, VA | Est. 2017

### **RULES & REGULATIONS**

First and foremost, our intent is to have a FUN league, in which players enjoy the classic game of dodgeball. We understand that, in the heat of the moment, each of us can experience heightened emotions, but it is important to know that we are playing in an ADULT, LGBT+ Ally, VOLUNTEER-BASED dodgeball league. Please do your part to ensure sportsmanlike behavior to our volunteers, players, sponsors, and community at all times, both on and off the court.

Players who do not abide by the rules and regulations herein may be disciplined within the confines of the sport, up to and including being removed from play. No refunds will be administered for players that are expelled due to disciplinary action. Violent and aggressive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. The Stonewall Sports Richmond Board and the Stonewall Dodgeball Richmond Pit Crew (League Umpires & Leadership) reserve the right to make decisions in the spirit of fairness, even if a strict interpretation of the rules indicates a different ruling.

By refusing to follow the rules and regulations, you will forfeit your right to participate in any future Stonewall Dodgeball games and events.

### **HONOR SYSTEM**

In dodgeball, possibly more so than any other sport, the honor system is key! It's what separates us from the animals, people!

- If you realize that you have been hit by a ball and you're out, leave the court!
- If you see that a teammate has been hit by a ball and is out, let them know!
- Not following either of these codes of conduct is technically cheating, and will be treated as such.

All players who get out, either by being hit, having their ball caught, or by stepping out of bounds, need to leave the court, even if a referee does not call it. The referee failing to call you out does not remove your obligation to abide by the rules. Every player in Stonewall Dodgeball will be held to the highest ethical standards. Anyone found repeatedly violating the honor system will be carded, and

multiple violations are grounds for dismissal from our league. Cheaters are no fun, and are not welcome in our league.

## EQUIPMENT

### BALLS

Stonewall Dodgeball is played with people-friendly “no-sting” soft rubber balls. While they aren’t the giant red monsters that you used to get NAILED with as a child, please be aware that any object hurled at high speeds can still sting a little if/when it connects with your frail human body.

### UNIFORM

Every player in the league is required to wear the **current season** official Stonewall Dodgeball t-shirt or tank top provided at the start of each season. Unregistered players are not allowed to play, even if you loan them your t-shirt. Players are also required to wear athletic shoes. No bare feet, sandals, flip flops, etc.

PLEASE NOTE: Clothing and hair **do** count if they are hit by a dodgeball.

### THE SAFETY GEAR

While not required, protective sports gear (such as knee pads, sports goggles, athletic tape, mouth guards) are allowed, and even encouraged, to be worn. Please note that *any* articles of clothing are eligible to be hit by a ball, and will result in an out.

### THE LEAGUE EQUIPMENT

Stonewall Sports Richmond will provide netting, marking tape, balls, whistles, etc. Every week, there will be a 10-15 minute period of setup before the first match and after the last match. This will include politely moving any items that belong to the facility that are not needed, and replacing these items afterwards. We appreciate help from players in setting up courts, and resetting the facility before we leave each night.

## MATCHES / SCORING / TIMING

***Match:*** a 40-minute matchup of 2 teams consisting of multiple **games**.

A standard Stonewall Dodgeball **match** consists of a 40-minute time period, during which two teams compete in as many **games** as time permits. A game ends when one team has completely eliminated all players from the opposing team. Every game won will be scored as 1 point. The team with the most points at the end of a match is the winner. The Captain of each team is responsible for confirming the scores.

If match time expires in the middle of a game, that game is declared void. No points are awarded.

Tie games are possible in regular season matches. If teams are tied in an end-of-season/ tournament match, that match will enter overtime and, if necessary, sudden death.

Teams are required to switch court sides at the first opportunity between games midway through the match (at or soon after the 20-minute mark).

Games that start late will not necessarily get extra play time. This is due to our schedule with the facility. We encourage teams to arrive early for their matches so that both sides are ready to go, on time.

## TEAMS

### KEY FIGURES

Number of Players per Team	16-20 players (depending on the season)
Maximum Players per Game	12 players per team
Minimum Players per Game	8 players needed by a team
Maximum Substitutes per Game	0 (zero) subs allowed

### MAX PLAYERS

Each team starts with up to 12 players. Any players in excess of 12 must sit out for that **game**. Benched players may not play until the **game** is over, and may not enter play if their team makes a catch. Benched players may shag balls from out-of-bounds and make them available to live players.

### ROTATING PLAYERS

Each game, all benched players should return to the game, and the Team Captain should pick new players to sit on the bench. Benched players may not stay benched more than 1 game in a row. The intent of this rule is to prevent teams from pressuring players not to play. As such, exceptions to this rule may be granted at the referee's discretion if a player legitimately needs some extra downtime.

### MINIMUM PLAYERS

Teams must play with at least 8 players. Without 8 players, 5 minutes into the match, the match will be forfeit with a score of 15-0.

When starting every game, umpires and referees should ensure that benched players have rotated and that both teams have 8-12 players.

Per Stonewall Sports regulations, registered players must be at least 21 years of age.

## UMPIRES & REFEREES

**Four officials (Umps & Refs) will be expected for each match. Each referee must be officially certified by the Stonewall Head Umpire before officiating.**

Teams will provide 3 referees when scheduled. All of these referees *must* have passed the Referee Test, or otherwise approved by the Head Umpire. Two of these referees will serve as line refs, with

the ability to call players out, while monitoring court boundaries and teams' outlines. The third referee will act as a second umpire, monitoring one team looking for outs, boundaries, etc.

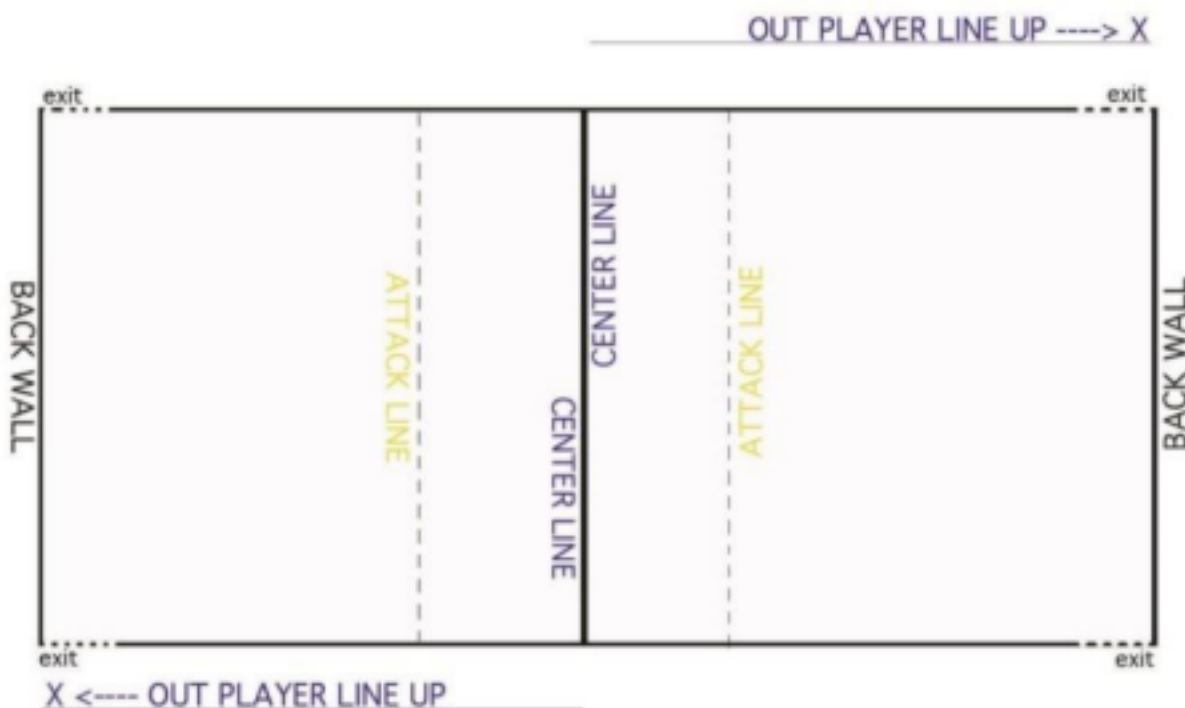
The team captain for the reffing team can ask a player from another team to fill in for them, as long as it is discussed with the Head Umpire before the game.

If any of the 3 referees are not present for the start of the game, that team will be penalized 2 points for each missing referee. Matches may proceed at the discretion of the Pit Crew, or Stonewall Board, if too few referees are available.

Umpires & Referees are here to ensure the integrity of the game. An official's main priority is to keep the game moving and to rule on any unclear plays. Certified Umpires are trained by the League to be well-versed in the rules. They also are the ultimate authority on calling players out. It is not their job to police players, as players are expected to adhere to the aforementioned honor system.

All Umpire & Referee calls are final. An official League Umpire, however, can overturn a call made by a team-submitted Referee, at their discretion. While Captains may **calmly** discuss a play with an Umpire or Referee, **no players are allowed to dispute or argue or berate League Officials.** Unsportsmanlike behavior towards referees and umpires will result in penalty cards or potential further action.

## THE COURT



## START OF GAME

A standard Stonewall Dodgeball match is played with 7 balls. All 7 balls will be placed along the court's center line, with 3 on one side and 4 on the other. At the start of the game, teams run for the balls on their right (either the set of 3 or set of 4). Whether your team gets 3 balls or 4 is determined

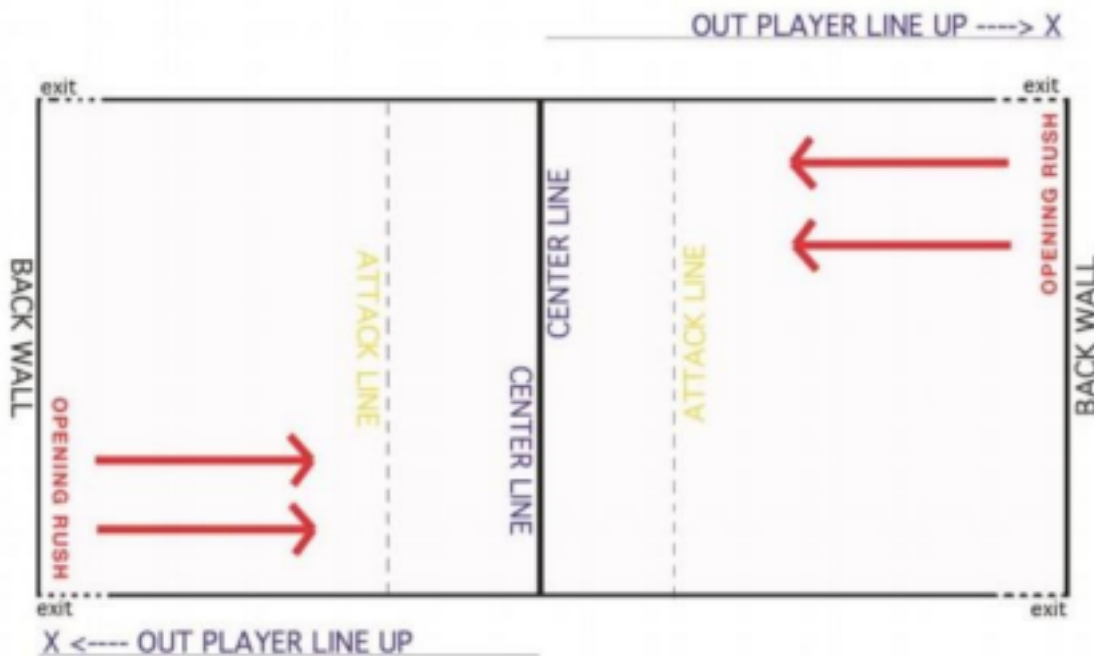
by the Umps and Captains prior to start (see below for more information). Players may not try to get the balls on their left unless the other team leaves them behind after the initial rush.

As mentioned above, Umps & Captains meet before the game to determine Ball Control. This is done by rock-paper-scissors in the regular season, but during playoffs, ball control will be determined by team seeding. Whichever Captain wins rock-paper-scissors (or higher seed, in playoffs) may choose **either** the side they wish to play on first, **or** to start with ball control.

- If the captain chooses ball control, then the set of 4 balls will be placed on *their* right side. The three remaining balls will be placed on the opposing team's right side.
- If the captain chooses their side, they may choose which half of the court on which they wish to begin the match.

At the start of each game, all players on court must line up behind the back line on their side of the court. All players' entire bodies must remain behind this line until the Umpire gives the starting whistle. Umpires will begin each game counting down from 3... 2... 1... *\*whistle\**.

On that starting whistle, players may run to retrieve any of the balls within their initial control (a.k.a. *only* the balls on their right side). This is known as the initial rush. During the rush (and only during the rush), players may inadvertently step over the center line without being called out.



**SAFETY NOTE:** Players may not slide or dive to the line to grab balls in the initial rush.

**FALSE STARTS:** Running for the balls before the Umpire's whistle (a false start) is not allowed. The Umpire will issue a warning after a team's first false start. Subsequent infractions will result in the player's team losing a ball from their side.

**ATTACK LINES:** Attack lines are lines on the court. All balls must clear the attack line in the initial rush before they can be brought into play. This can be done in one of two ways:

- A player carries the ball across the attack line with both feet.
- A player tosses the ball to another player already standing behind the attack line with both feet.

Any ball thrown without clearing the Attack Line will be declared a dead ball. Since it is a dead ball, hits and catches for that throw will not count.

## HOW TO WIN

A team will be declared the winner of a game when all the players on the opposing team have been eliminated from play. When a player has been eliminated from play, he or she is said to be out.

## GETTING OUT

You can be eliminated by an opponent:

- If that opponent throws a ball and it makes contact with you or your clothing without being caught (see “CATCHING”).
- If that opponent catches a ball you throw offensively (see “THROWING”).

Or you can be eliminated by making infractions against the rules:

- Touching the opposing team’s court (crossing the center line)
- Jumping or dodging out of bounds
- Demonstrating poor sportsmanship

## THROWING

The surest way to eliminate an opponent is to throw a ball at them. The key word here is “throw”. Balls that are kicked, spiked, punched, belly-bumped, or spit out *are not valid forms of throwing*. In fact, if you repeatedly use any of these methods, that is grounds for penalty.

You must not touch the opponent’s side of the court. You may reach over the center line to get a ball, but you may not touch the floor on the opponent’s side, or you will be out.

All throws must be made with both feet behind the “buffer zone”. The buffer zone is designated by 2 lines (1 on each side of the court), parallel to the center line. The buffer puts more distance between throwers and the opposing team. You may cross the buffer, all the way up to the center line, to retrieve a ball. Throws made from within the buffer zone will **not** get opponents out, though **any catches** made with those throws **will** count. Throwing a ball from within the buffer zone is not a guaranteed out.

# CATCHING

When a player catches a (live) ball thrown by an opposing player, they are not only eliminating the thrower, they will also allow the first person waiting in their team's outline to re-enter the game.

A catch is only valid if both of the catching player's feet are in bounds, and the catcher clearly demonstrates control of the ball before releasing it.

**MAINTAINING BALL CONTROL:** If a player has a ball in his or her hands and catches another ball, the player must maintain possession of both balls. If a player catches a ball but subsequently drops the other ball, the catches still count, but that catcher is out, as well.

**TRAPS:** A *trap* is when a ball is caught while making contact with the floor or part of the building at the same time. Traps do not count as a hit or a catch and both players are considered safe.

## DEFLECTIONS / BLOCKING

A ball is said to be deflected after it comes in contact with a player or a ball held by a player. A player may use his or her ball to block incoming balls thrown by the opposing team.

Players must maintain possession of their ball immediately after deflecting a live ball. If a player drops a ball used for a deflection, that player is out.

**Ball deflections cannot get additional players out.**

**However, catches count for deflected balls.**

**EXAMPLE:** If a ball hits player 1, player 2, and player 3, then lands on the ground, only player 1 is out. But, if player 3 catches the ball, players 1 & 2 are safe, the thrower is out, and player 3's team gets a player back from the front of the outline.

**RULES CLARIFICATION:** If a ball hits you and pops up in the air, you can still save yourself by catching it. Watch out though, the opposing team may try to hit you while you're going for the catch. If you are hit by a second ball, you can still catch the first ball until the second ball becomes a dead ball, since both balls are still live during that time.

**RULES CLARIFICATION:** If you block a ball into the air and then try to catch it, you need to hold onto the ball you blocked with until the fly-ball is caught. Otherwise, this counts as a drop of the blocking ball, and you will be called out. This is due to the difficulty in determining if you dropped the ball purposefully, or on accident.

**RULES CLARIFICATION:** If a ball hits you and it's on its way to the ground, you are still a live player, able to make throws and catches, until the moment the ball that hit you becomes dead.

## **LIVE BALL / DEAD BALL**

A thrown ball is said to be live once it leaves a player's hand and crosses the center line. A live ball can either eliminate opposing players by coming in contact with them or be caught until it becomes a dead ball. Once dead, a ball stays dead until it is thrown offensively again.

A ball becomes a dead ball by:

- Coming in contact with any part of the court or building
- Coming in contact with another ball traveling through the air or laying on the floor •  
Coming in contact with an eliminated player or non-player
- Directly impacting on an opposing player's head
- Being caught by an opposing player
- Coming back across the center line (i.e. bouncing off an opponent, or a ball they're holding, and rolling back)

## **PINCHING**

Pinching is defined as manipulating the ball so that rubber touches rubber. Pinching is not allowed in Stonewall Dodgeball. A player's first infraction will result in a warning. Subsequent infractions will result in the player being called out and issued a penalty card. Players who pinch from week to week or match to match may be removed from play.

## **HEADSHOTS**

Headshots aren't fun, and we discourage throws to the head by making direct headshots invalid. A direct headshot is defined as a ball that travels directly from an opposing player's hands to a defending player's head. Direct headshots will result in the ball immediately becoming a dead ball, meaning that the defending player is not out.

However, as with the rules of Stonewall Kickball, if a player's head is below the plane of height (if they duck, dive, etc.) and then they get hit in the head, they will be called out.

Players who are hit in the face may remove themselves from play for up to two minutes (or more at the Umpire'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 the 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 gameplay. This includes players who repeatedly throw within "head range" (between 5'0" and 6'5") and continue to do so after receiving a warning from an Umpire or Referee.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Deliberately using your head to block balls will result in being called out. If an Ump or Ref believe that a player is using their head to deflect or block, they will call that player out.

**PLEASE NOTE:** A ball caught against a player's head is considered a catch. A ball that hits a player's head and is immediately caught by that player is also considered a catch.

## **BALL CONTROL / COUNTDOWN**

The game is played with 7 balls at a time. When a team has majority possession of the balls (4 or more), that team is said to have ball control.

Once a team gains ball control, that team has 15 seconds to relinquish majority possession. Referees will start counting after 5 seconds, counting down from 10 to 0. Failing to give up ball control within the 15 second time period will result in the Officials stopping play and awarding the other team possession of all 7 balls.

The 15 second time period resets as soon as a team throws or rolls enough balls to give up majority possession. If balls are thrown and immediately bounce back, giving the same team majority possession, the 15-second time period will immediately reset.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Balls must be thrown or rolled over the center line. Balls may not be placed by hand over the center line.

## **OUT-OF-BOUNDS**

Live players must generally stay within the boundaries of their side of the court.

### **LEGALLY EXITING THE COURT**

A player may only exit the court in order to retrieve balls that have bounced or rolled out-of-bounds. *Exit and enter from the back.* When exiting the court, a player must use the open "exits" on the rear of both sides of the court. Exits can be thought of as approximately 3 to 4 feet extending from the back line of each side of the court. Players may not cross the center line, even when out-of-bounds. When returning, for safety reasons, players must return only through the exit space. *Exit only for balls that are out-of-bounds.* Players may not exit their court if there is no ball out of bounds. They may not exit the court until the ball passes the out-of-bounds line. Exiting the court in anticipation of a ball that is headed for the out-of-bounds zone is not allowed, and will result in being called out. *Return promptly.* Once out-of-bounds, a player must immediately return to the game. Failure to return within 10 seconds will result in that player being called out.

Don't bring the balls with you. Players may not carry a ball from their court to the out-of-bounds zone. They may, however, collect and carry as many out-of-bounds balls as they want within the 10 second out-of-bounds time limit. Carrying a ball out-of-bounds will result in being called out. When out, don't reach in-bounds. Players who have legally gone out-of-bounds to retrieve a ball are safe and cannot be eliminated (nor can they make catches) until they re-enter the court with both feet.

*The last live player on a team cannot exit the court.* If a player is the last live player on their team and exits the court for any reason, the other team will be declared the winner of that game.

## DODGING/CATCHING OUT-OF-BOUNDS

Players cannot dodge out-of-bounds. If a player moves out of bounds in order to avoid being hit by a ball, that player will be called out. Players must have one foot completely crossing the line for them to be declared out-of-bounds.



For players' safety, players who step or fall out-of-bounds while catching an opponent's ball are safe, provided that they successfully catch the ball. Whether the catch is successful depends on when the defending player successfully takes control of the ball. If they take control of the ball while both feet are still within court boundaries, the catch is valid. If a player's foot is outside the court boundaries when they take control of the ball, the catch is invalid and both players are safe.

## CENTERLINE

While players may reach across the centerline in order to retrieve a ball, their body and clothes 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. Players who are out-of-bounds also may not cross the center line (e.g. to retrieve balls). Out players may not reach over the center line, either.

For safety reasons, jumping across the line in an attempt to hit the opposing team before you hit the ground (known as a suicide play) is not allowed in Stonewall Dodgeball.



## THE OUTLINE

**GOING TO THE OUTLINE:** Once a player is eliminated, they must immediately proceed to their team's outline, located out-of-bounds to the right side of that team's court. The first person standing in the outline is the first person eligible for re-entry when their team makes a catch. As soon as a player is eliminated, they can in no way interfere with the ongoing game while proceeding to the Outline. This means no swatting oncoming balls or kicking/passing balls to fellow team members as they exit the court.

**ORDER & LINE JUMPING:** Players must line up in the order that they were hit. Line jumping (in which one player cuts in front of a teammate who was eliminated before them) will result in yellow carding of all involved, and forfeiture of the ongoing game. Players must remain in the outline in the order they were hit.

**GETTING BACK IN:** Players must already be standing in the outline with both feet in order to come back into a game on a catch. That means that if you're the first one out on your team, and you're on your way to the outline when a catch is made, that catch does **not** get you in. This also means that if you are the first player in the outline, you leave the line to shag a ball for your team, and your team makes a catch, you are unable to rejoin the game until you are back in line and another catch is made.

A player becomes active upon re-entry as soon as he or she steps in-bounds with both feet.

Other than shagging balls out-of-bounds, players in the outline may not interfere with the game at any time, for any reason.

**PLEASE NOTE:** For safety reasons, once you have been eliminated, please drop or hand off any ball you are currently holding and walk quickly and directly to the outline, while watching for incoming throws. It is your responsibility to protect yourself while walking to the outline.

## SHAGGING

Both eliminated and benched players may shag balls for their teams while in the out-of-bounds zone. This means that they can retrieve any ball on their side of the court in the out-of-bounds zone and make them available to live players on their team.

Shagged balls *can only* be made available to live players in one of two ways:

- Balls may be placed on the sideline of their own team's court.
- Balls may be rolled from the sideline of their own team's court to the same side. •

Balls may be handed directly to teammates.

Shaggers *may not*:

- Throw balls into their own court.
- Roll or throw balls into the opposing court. A player may only exit the court in order to retrieve balls that have bounced or rolled out-of-bounds.

## INJURIES

Players who are injured during the course of play may remove themselves from play for up to two minutes (at the Umpire's discretion) in order to compose themselves and make sure they are still able to physically continue. The Umpire may stop play during this time.

If a player is unable to continue after two minutes, the first person in the outline will be allowed to take his or her place. If there are no players in the outline, and if the team has rostered players present who are not in the current game, then an alternate rostered player may take the injured player's spot. No other replacements are allowed without approval from the Pit Crew or Stonewall Sports Richmond Board.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If a player is injured and the player's team has been eliminated while he or she is still off court, or that player is the sole remaining player on their side, the opposing team will be declared the winner.

## STALLING

Teams must deliver the balls to the opposing side in a manner that the opposing team has an opportunity to take possession of the balls. Throwing balls consistently and deliberately out of bounds or so that they bounce over the opponents' heads is considered *stalling*. If an Umpire or referee concludes that a team is stalling, the Umpire will deliver one verbal warning. If a team continues to stall, the referee will stop play and award all the balls to the opposing team.

## TIME OUTS & CHALLENGES

Both teams are allowed one 30-second time out per match. Team captains are the only players that can call for a time out. If a timeout to challenge a call is being used and the challenge is won by the team taking the timeout, then the team will retain their timeout. Captains may use this timeout as a second and final challenge, or a regular timeout.

During a time out, eliminated captains (and only eliminated captains) may step on to the court in order to address any live players. Players who are out must remain off the court. Players holding balls may continue to hold them, although all other balls should be left alone during the time out.

Time outs are given at the Umpire's discretion. A time out is not official until the Umpire's whistle is blown, at which point all gameplay is stopped and all balls are declared dead (even if in midair). Time does not stop during normal time outs but do stop during challenges. No timeouts can be used when the time clock is under 2 minutes.

## PENALTY CARDS

Players who persistently refuse to abide by the above rules or who grossly violate safety rules will face discipline at the Umpire's discretion. Discipline may begin with a verbal warning, and may

escalate to a player being issued a penalty card. Teams with players removed from play for penalty cards must play down the number of players removed from play (i.e. fewer than 12 players for the rest of the match).

## **YELLOW CARDS**

A player who is issued a yellow card is automatically declared out if they are a live player, and must sit out the remainder of the game in session and for the following game. Players who receive two yellow cards in one match will automatically receive a red card.

***Cheating (i.e. not going out when you are hit) is a yellow-card offense.***

## **RED CARDS**

A player who is issued a red card must sit out the remainder of the match in session. If a player receives a red card, he or she may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion from the league at the discretion of the Umpires or Board. Players expelled from the league are not eligible for refunds.

# **PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT**

We're all adults here. As adults, you are all expected to treat everyone else in the league with respect and dignity. This means all the following are absolutely unacceptable:

- Picking arguments over dodgeball in our sponsors' venues.
- Picking arguments over dodgeball on social media websites.
- Instigating violence of any kind on the court or in our sponsors' venues.
- Verbally or textually berating or using derogatory language towards any teammates, other league players, or officials, including electronic communication.
- Disrespecting the facilities in which our league is played, either by causing them damage or acting out of line to the employees, or any other form of disrespect.

Any player found to be engaging in any of these behaviors will be disciplined accordingly.

# **END OF SEASON PLAYOFFS**

Every season ends with a single-elimination tournament to declare the season champions. Team standings at the end of regular season play will dictate team seeding for the playoffs. The Pit Crew or Board will release a schedule for play several days prior to the commencement of playoffs.

## **OVERTIME / SUDDEN DEATH**

Due to the single elimination nature of the playoffs, tie games are not allowed. If a playoff match's time expires with a tie score, that match will enter overtime.

Overtime consists of a 5 minute period of play. Both teams start a new game with their full roster back in. When the 5 minute time period expires, the team with the most live players left on court will be declared the winner.

In the event that both teams have an equal number of live players, the match will be restarted with the remaining players and enter a period of Sudden Death. The first team to have any single player eliminated will lose the match.

## **END OF GAME**

When approaching the end of the match's time, the Umpire(s) and Referees will initiate a 10-second countdown. At the end of the countdown, once the refs blow the whistle, all balls are considered "dead" and the match is over. Teams are then encouraged to high-five and head to the after party!

## **GAME CANCELLATION**

In the event of a weather emergency or facility shutdown, Stonewall Dodgeball has the right to cancel games. These games may or may not be rescheduled at a later date, at the discretion of the Stonewall Sports Richmond Board. All cancellations will be announced by 5pm the day of the event, and communicated to all players accordingly.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

In the event of an emergency, all players will follow the directions of the Pit Crew and/or Board. League Leadership will work with facility officials and/or the appropriate authority to manage and disseminate information. All injuries and medical conditions should be reported to a member of the Board prior to each match. If a player has a medical condition that may impact their ability to play, they must inform a member of the Board before the start of games and matches. The Board will then determine appropriate measures, up to and including whether or not that player may play. Safety is one of the top priorities of Stonewall Sports | Richmond, and if needed, League Leadership will pause or stop games to ensure the safety of all of its players.