

A large, light gray watermark of the Stonewall Sports logo is centered in the background. The logo is circular and contains the text 'STONEWALL' at the top, 'SPORTS' at the bottom, and 'Richmond, VA | Est. 2017' at the very bottom. In the center of the logo is a stylized illustration of a person in a blue shirt and brown pants, possibly a coach or player, standing on a field.

Kickball - Rules updates, clarifications, and additions

Stonewall Sports – Richmond
Spring 2026 Season

Rule Clarification 1

Current rule:

7.4. Runners must stay within the baseline. Any Runner that runs outside the baseline is “Out” unless the Runner is merely following a **natural running arc** or changing course to avoid interference with a Fielder making a play (see 11.2(k)). Runners may move no more than four feet (4’) outside the baseline when attempting to avoid a ball tag.

Need for clarification: What is considered a natural running arc?

Rule Clarification 1

- 7.4 Natural vs. unnatural running arc
 - There are limits to what can be considered a natural running arc. Umpires should be generous in what is allowed as long as the Runner
 - 1) did not run in a straight line through 2nd or 3rd base (taking them more than four feet out of the baseline followed by a turn toward the next base or home plate),
 - 2) has forward momentum continuing throughout the arc, or if they stop, the Runner makes no further movement away from the baseline, and
 - 3) has not caused an avoidable safety issue (e.g., having to run from close to the fence through a team that is located appropriately on the sidelines).

This clarification will be emphasized to umpires and captains. It does not require updating the rules.

Rule Update and Clarification 2

Current rule:

7.8. Hitting a Runner's neck or head with a thrown ball ("headshot") is not allowed, except when the Runner is ducking, sliding, or intentionally dodging (i.e. not in a natural running position) to avoid a throw. If a headshot occurs, the Runner is "Safe" and advances to the base they were running toward when the ball hits the Runner.

Need for clarification: We understand that the runner hit with a headshot advances to the base they were running toward when they were hit, but what about other runners on the field? When does the play stop?

Rule Update and Clarification 2

7.8. Play ends when the Umpire makes the call that a headshot has occurred. The hit Runner *and any other Runner who was advancing to the next base* are awarded the base to which they were running when the headshot occurred.

- There are two unlikely exceptions to this outcome. 1) If there is a trailing Runner who is advancing toward the same base as another Runner (e.g., a faster Runner who has nearly caught up to a slower one, or if the leading Runner got a late start). In this scenario, regardless of which Runner received the headshot, the trailing Runner returns to the base they most recently touched, as do players who may have been trailing behind the trailing Runner. Only the leading Runner would advance to the next base.
- 2) If an Umpire has reason to believe that a Runner has been targeted with a headshot in order to stop play for strategic reasons (i.e., limit the number of bases a fast Runner might reach on the play), the Umpire has the discretion to award one extra base to Runners.

Rule Update and Clarification 2

This rule will read as:

7.8. Hitting a Runner's neck or head with a thrown ball ("headshot") is not allowed, except when the Runner is ducking, sliding, or intentionally dodging (i.e. not in a natural running position) to avoid a throw. Play ends when the Umpire calls that a headshot has occurred. The hit Runner and any other Runner who was advancing to the next base are awarded the base to which they were running when the headshot occurred.

The two unlikely scenarios enumerated on the previous page will be emphasized to umpires and captains.

Rule(s) Update and Clarification 3

Current rule(s) related to baselines and interference:

7.4 Runner staying in baseline

7.5 Fielder staying out of baseline

12.2.1 Interference by Fielder

12.2.2 Interference by Runner

Need for clarification: Each of these rules explain important parts of the game related to running and fielding, including when it is inappropriate for a Fielder to be touching a base or in the baseline (i.e., when there is not an active play in the area, or when there is a play at a base *and* the Fielder is leaning out of the baseline). None of these rules cover who has the right of way if a Fielder is making an active play in the baseline while the Runner is advancing to the next base using that baseline. With this change, 7.5 will detail when the fielder can be in the baseline (when fielding an active play).

Rule(s) Update and Clarification 3

This rule will read as:

7.5. Fielders must stay out of the direct baseline at the start of any play and during play, when there is not an active play in the area.

7.5.1 Fielders trying to make an out at a base may have their foot on base, but must lean out of the baseline. Runners hindered by any Fielder within the baseline or standing on the base – not making an active play for the ball – shall be “Safe” at the base to which they were running (see 12.2.1). Runners may choose to advance beyond this base.

7.5.2 In the event that a Fielder is making an active play in the baseline while a Runner is advancing to the next base using that baseline, the Fielder has the right of way to make the play as long as they did not begin the play in the baseline. When an active play is being made in the baseline, it is the responsibility of the Runner to avoid a collision and/or interference. In most cases, this will involve running behind the Fielder who is making the play or stalling to determine if the Fielder will successfully field the ball. Running in front of the play risks the Runner getting hit by the ball, which would result in them being called out (if hit).

Rule(s) Update and Clarification 3

Clarification to be given to umpires and captains:

Writing in the rules that a Fielder is not allowed to start the play directly in the baseline will help raise awareness in the league of proper placement for safety reasons. It is difficult, however, to arbitrate.

Umpires will speak to base refs prior to the game to ask that they check the baseline periodically just prior to the start of a play. Base refs and Fielders alike are encouraged to speak between plays to Fielder(s) starting the play in the baseline, reminding them of appropriate placement informed by baseline and interference-related rules.

The focus of this rule remains in place - that when there is an active play in the baseline, it is the responsibility of the Runner to avoid a collision or interference, as the Fielder has the right of way to field the ball.

Rule Update and Clarification 4

Current rule(s):

15.2 “If pay, then you play” rule

Need for update: The current rule creates a scenario in which an entire team is penalized by a Paper Forfeit and Game Forfeit, in addition to a one-game suspension of involved violating players (subject to additional penalties at the discretion of League Leadership) even if *only one player* on the team discouraged a teammate from playing. In some cases, this would prevent a team that paid from playing even though most players on the team did not violate the rule.

Rule Update and Clarification 4

This rule will read as:

15.2 Players are not allowed to discourage any member of their Team from playing for ANY reason - except when the player is injured or has a legitimate medical conditions than inhibits ability to play (see 3.3.4). The Board will investigate any allegations, but the burden of proof rests with the alleging party.

If determined that one or more Player(s) willfully and intentionally discouraged a member of their Team from playing, the resulting penalty will be a suspension for the next game. Once one or more Player(s) on a Team has been suspended due to this rule, the Team Captain must discuss this rule with the Team, emphasizing that any further discouragement from play will not be tolerated.

Rule Update and Clarification 4

This rule will read as:

15.2, continued

If one or more subsequent offense(s) occurs from the Team during a given season, and the Captain had discouraged additional violations, only the player who discouraged participation a subsequent time will be penalized, including another game suspension (and subject to additional penalties at the discretion of League Leadership).

If instead it is found that after the first suspension(s), the Captain did not emphasize that discouraging participation would not be tolerated, additional offenses will result in a Paper Forfeit and Game Forfeit for the game when the alleged violation occurred AND one-game suspension of involved violating players.

Rule Update and Clarification 5

Justification: Adding an additional tiebreaker before a possible coin toss to recognize offensive ability before leaving decisions to chance. Runs allowed remains in place as the third tie-breaker to discourage “running up the score” in a recreational league.

Appendix A - Protocol used for calculating weekly rankings and playoff bracket

This rule will read as:

1. Standing Point Differential (or Standing Point Differential divided by Total Games Played for Playoff Bracket Calculations)
2. “Head-to-head” play
3. Team with less points scored against (“runs allowed”)
4. Team with stronger runs scored differential
5. Leadership coin toss

Rule Update and Clarification 5

Clarification:

It will be made clear to all Umpires and Captains that the final inning of a game will not be played in full if after the first half of the inning, the Home team is winning.

Furthermore, if the Home team is tied or losing going into the second part of the final inning, the game will end at the point that they earn enough runs to win the game.

Teams may not continue the game beyond either of these points in an attempt to increase their run differential.

New Rule 1: Justification

Justification for new rule: Players pay to play a predetermined number of regular season games, but every season, multiple teams forfeit games because they do not have enough players available to play.

Creating a reasonable rule that reduces the number of forfeits in the league in a safe, fair, and clear manner benefits the league as a whole.

New Rule 1: Details

How to manage substitutions in a safe, fair, and clear way:

- Teams need at least eight players to avoid forfeiting the game. No more than one time per season (and only during the regular season), any team that has at least six players present at a scheduled game may arrange for the number of substitute players needed to get to eight to ten players.
- The purpose of this rule is to avoid a forfeit. It is *not* to gain competitive advantage in a game. If a team is suspected of discouraging players from attending so that they can use substitutes, the team will be required to forfeit.
- Substitutes must be currently registered Stonewall Sports kickball players from the same division or lower than the team requesting additional players.
- Substitutes must wear their current season's Stonewall kickball t-shirt (even though it will likely be a different color than the team for which they will be playing).

New Rule 1: How to use rule

How to use the substitution rule:

- A captain that wants to use their one allowed use of substitutes (per season) must message the Kickball Director on GroupMe by 10 am of the game day in which the substitutes are to be used, including the following information:
 - The number of players from the captain's team that will be playing in the game
 - The name of any substitute that will play with the team
 - The team that each of these substitutes play on
- The Kickball Director will verify that:
 - The team has not already used substitutes from another team during the season
 - The team has a sufficient number of original team players present to use this rule, and
 - The team will have no more than 10 players including substitutes for the game
- The Kickball Director will notify the game's umpire of the approval of specific substitutes.
- In the event that the Kickball Director cannot be present on a gameday or if there is no Kickball Director on the board, the Operations Director will assume this responsibility.

New Rule 1 (compared to previous years)

Rule prior to this season:

3.3.1 Players needed to play: Each Team must field at least eight (8) players - but no more than eleven (11) Players - at a scheduled game. If a Team cannot meet the minimum requirement, then the Team receives a Game Forfeit for that day's game. Non-competitive play may continue with consent from the opposing Team.

Current rule

3.3.1 Players needed to play: Each team must have at least eight (8) players present in order to be eligible to play, with between eight (8) to eleven (11) players on the field while the team is fielding. Since all players participating in the game are required to kick, the kicking order can and in most cases will have more than eleven players in it.

No more than one time per season (and only during the regular season), any team that has at least six players present at a scheduled game may arrange for the number of substitute players needed to get to a maximum of eight to ten players. [Rule continues as listed on the previous pages...]

If a team is unable to get substitutes for their one allowed occurrence, chooses not to use substitutes, or has already used their allowed occurrence, and has fewer than eight (8) players present at a game, then the Team receives a Game Forfeit for that day's game. Non-competitive play may continue with consent from the opposing Team.

New Rule 2

Justification for new rule:

The rule below is from last year's national Stonewall Sports tournament, and this rule would enhance the environment for safety in SSRVA Kickball.

This rule will read as:

7.8.1 A Fielder kicking a ball at a Runner is not allowed. Fielders may kick the ball to other team members but if a ball that is kicked by a Fielder strikes a Runner, the Runner will be deemed safe, and the play will result in an automatic dead ball.

Clarification to umpires and captains:

The two unlikely exceptions described in the clarified headshot rule section apply here too: 1) trailing Runners advancing to the same base and 2) Fielder's intentional and/or strategic ending of play to prevent fast Runners from advancing).

New Rule (Section) 3

Justification for new rule:

Auditory interference creates possible safety issues when Player(s) are less likely to be able to hear Umpires, Base Referees, and other Players.

This rule will read as:

12.2.7 Auditory interference: The field environment should be arranged so that players have optimal opportunity to hear the Umpire and other players. Players are not allowed to wear headphones to listen to music, podcasts, audiobooks, etc. during active play. Assistive devices for listening are allowed.

Speakers are allowed on the sidelines playing music at a reasonable volume that allows for Umpires and players to be heard. There should not be multiple speakers on a field playing music at the same time, however. If players on both teams want to play music during the game, only the kicking team can play music through the speaker they brought.