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OFFICIAL IRA FOUR-WALL RULES

PART I. THE GAME

Rule 1. 1-Types of Games. Racquetball may be played by two or four players. When played by two it is called "singles;" and when played by four, "doubles."

Rule 1. 2-Description. Racquetball, as the name implies, is a competitive game in which a racquet is used to serve and return the ball.

Rule 1. 3-Objective. The objective is to win each volley by serving or returning the ball so the opponent is unable to keep the ball in play. A serve or volley is won when a side is unable to return the ball before it touches the floor twice.

Rule 1. 4-Points and Outs. Points are scored only by the serving side when it serves an ace or wins a volley. When the serving side loses a volley it loses the serve. Losing the serve is called an "out" in singles, and a "hand-out" in doubles.

Rule 1. 5-Game. A game is won by the side first scoring 21 points.

Rule 1: 6-Match. A match is won by the side first winning two games.

PART II. COURT AND EQUIPMENT

Rule 2. 1-Court. The specifications for the standard four-wall racquetball court are:

(a) *Dimension.* The dimensions shall be 20 feet wide, 20 feet high, and 40 feet long, with back wall at least 12 feet high.

(b) *Lines and Zones.* Racquetball courts shall be divided and marked on the floors with 1½ inch wide red or white lines as follows:

(1) *Short Line.* The short line is midway between the front and back walls and is parallel with the front and back walls dividing the court into equal front and back courts.

(2) *Service Line.* The service line is parallel with and located 5 feet in front of the short line.

(3) *Service Zone.* The service zone is the space between the outer edges of the short and service lines.

(4) *Service Boxes.* A service box is located at each end of the service zone by lines 18 inches from and parallel with each side wall.

(5) *Receiving Lines.* Five feet back of the short line, vertical lines shall be marked on each side wall extending 3 inches from the floor. See rule 4.7(a).

Rule 2. 2-Ball Specifications. The specifications for the standard racquetball are:

(a) *Official Ball.* IRA's official ball is the black Seamless 558. The ball shall be 2¼ inches in diameter; weight approximately 1.40 ounces with the bounce at 65-70 inches from 100 inch drop at a temperature of 76 degrees F.

Rule 2. 3-Ball Selection. A new ball shall be selected by the referee for use in each match in all tournaments. During a game the referee may, at his discretion or at the request of both players or teams, select another ball. Balls that are not round or which bounce erratically shall not be used. The Seamless 558 ball is official for all IRA sanctioned tournaments.

Rule 2. 4-Racquet. The official racquet will have a maximum head length of 11 inches and a width of 9 inches. These measurements are computed from the outer edge of the racquet head rims. The handle may not exceed 7 inches in length. Total length and width of the racquet may not exceed a total of 27 inches.

(a) The racquet must include a thong so that it may be securely wrapped on the player's wrist.

(b) The racquet frame may be made of any material, as long as it conforms to the above specifications.

(c) The strings of the racquet must be gut, monofilament, or nylon, but cannot be of steel or metal.

Rule 2. 5-Uniform. All parts of the uniform, consisting of a shirt, shorts, socks and shoes, shall be clean and white. Warmup shirts and pants, if worn in actual match play, shall also be white but may be any color if not used in actual match play. Only club insignia and/or name of club or racquetball organization may be on the uniform. Players may not play without shirts.

PART III. OFFICIATING

Rule 3. 1-Tournaments. All tournaments shall be managed by a committee or chairman, who shall designate the officials.

Rule 3. 2-Officials. The officials shall include a referee and a scorer. Additional assistants and record keepers may be designated as desired.

Rule 3. 3-Qualifications. Since the quality of the officiating often determines the success of each tournament, all officials shall be experienced or trained, and shall be thoroughly familiar with these rules and with the local playing conditions.

Rule 3. 4-Rule Briefing. Before all tournaments, all officials and players shall be briefed on rules and on local court hindes or other regulations.

Rule 3. 5-Referees. (a) Pre-Match Duties. Before each match commences, it shall be the duty of the referee to:

(1) Check on adequacy of preparation of the court with respect to cleanliness, lighting and temperature, and upon location of locker rooms, drinking fountains, etc.

(2) Check on availability and suitability of all materials necessary for the match and as balls, towels, score cards and pencils.

(3) Check readiness and qualifications of assisting officials.

(4) Explain court regulations to players and inspect the compliance of racquets with rules.

(5) Remind players to have an adequate supply of extra racquets and uniforms.

(6) Introduce players, toss coin, and signal start of first game.

(b) *Decisions.* During games the referee shall decide all questions that may arise in accordance with these rules. If there is body contact on the back swing, the player should call it quickly. This is the only call a player may make. On all questions involving judgment and on all questions not covered by these rules, the decision of the referee is final.

(c) *Protests.* Any decision not involving the judgment of the referee may on protest be decided by the chairman, if present, or his delegated representative.

(d) *Forfeitures.* A match may be forfeited by the referee when:

(1) Any player refuses to abide by the referees decision, or engages in unsportsmanlike conduct.

(2) After warning any player leaves the court without permission of the referee either during a game or between the first and second games.

(3) Any player for a singles match, or any team for a doubles match fails to report to play. Normally, 20 minutes from the scheduled game time will be allowed before forfeiture. The tournament chairman may permit a longer delay if circumstances warrant such a decision.

(4) If both players for a singles, or both teams for doubles fail to appear to play for consolation matches or other play-offs, they shall forfeit their ratings for future tournaments and forfeit any trophies, medals, or awards.

Rule 2. 6-Scorers. The scorer shall keep a record of the progress of the game in the manner prescribed by the committee or chairman. As a minimum the progress record shall include the order of serves, outs, and points. The referee or scorer shall announce the score before each serve.

Rule 3. 7-Record Keepers. In addition to the scorer, the committee may designate additional persons to keep more detailed records for statistical purposes of the progress of the game.

PART IV. PLAY REGULATIONS


Rule 4. 1-Serve-Generally. (a) Order. The player or side winning the toss becomes the first server and starts the first game, and the third game, if any.

(b) *Start.* Games are started by the referee calling "play ball."

(c) *Place.* The server may serve from any place in the service zone. No part of either foot may extend beyond either line of the service zone. Stepping on the line (but not beyond it) is permitted. Server must remain in the service zone until the served ball passes short line. Violations are called "foot faults."

(d) *Manner.* A serve is commenced by bouncing the ball to the floor in the service zone, and on the first bounce the ball is struck by the server's racquet so that it hits the front wall and on the rebound hits the floor back of the short line, either with or without touching one of the side walls.

(e) *Readiness.* Serves shall not be made until the receiving side is ready, or the referee has called play ball.

Rule 4. 2-Serve-In Doubles. (a) *Server.* At the beginning of each game in doubles, each side shall inform the referee of the order of service, which order shall be followed throughout the game. Only the first server serves the first  up and continues to serve first throughout the game when the first server is out—the side is out. Thereafter both players on each side shall serve until a hand-out occurs. It is not necessary for the server to alternate serves to their opponents.

(b) *Partner's Position.* On each serve, the server's partner shall stand erect with his back to the side wall and with both feet on the floor within the service box until the served ball passes the short line. Violations are called "foot faults."

Rule 4. 3-Defective Serves. Defective serves are of three types resulting in penalties as follows:

(a) *Dead Ball Serve.* A dead ball serve results in no penalty and the server is given another serve without cancelling a prior illegal serve.

(b) *Fault Serve.* Two fault serves results in a hand-out.

(c) *Out Serves.* An out serve results in a hand-out. For details see Rule 4.6.

Rule 4. 4-Dead Ball Serves. Dead ball serves do not cancel any previous illegal serve. They occur when an otherwise legal serve:

(a) *Hits Partner.* Hits the server's partner on the fly on the rebound from the front wall while the server's partner is in the service box. Any serve that touches the floor before hitting the partner in the box is a short.

(b) *Screen Balls.* Passes too close to the server or the server's partner to obstruct the view of the returning side. Any serve passing behind the server's partner and the side wall is an automatic screen.

(c) *Court Hinders.* Hits any part of the court that under local rules is a dead ball.

Rule 4. 5-Fault Serves. The following serves are faults and any two in succession results in a handout:

(a) *Foot Faults.* A foot fault results:

(1) When the server leaves the service zone before the served ball passes the short line.

(2) When the server's partner leaves the service box before the served ball passes the short line.

(b) *Short Serve.* A short serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and on the rebound hits the floor in front of the back edge of the short line either with or without touching one side wall; or

(c) *Two-Side Serve.* A two-side serve is any ball served that first hits the front wall and on the rebound hits two side walls on the fly.

(d) *Ceiling Serve.* A ceiling serve is any served ball that touches the ceiling after hitting the front wall either with or without touching one side wall.

(e) *Long Serve.* A long serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and rebounds to the back wall before touching the floor.

(f) *Out of Court Serve.* Any ball going out of the court on the serve.

Rule 4.6. — Out serves. Any one of the following serves results in a handout:

(a) *Bounces.* Bouncing the ball more than three times while in the service zone before striking the ball. A bounce is a drop or throw to the floor, followed by a catch. The ball may not be bounced anywhere but on the floor within the service zone. Accidental dropping of the ball counts as one bounce.

(b) *Missed Ball.* Any attempt to strike the ball on the first bounce that results either in a total miss or in touching any part of the server's body other than his racquet.

(c) *Non-front Serve.* Any served ball that strikes the server's partner, or the ceiling, floor or side wall, before striking the front wall.

(d) *Touched Serve.* Any served ball that on the rebound from the front wall touches the server, or touches the server's partner while any part of his body is out of the service box, or the server's partner while any part of his body is out of the service box, or the server's partner intentionally touches the served ball on the fly.

(e) *Out-of-Order Serve.* In doubles, when either partner serves out of order.

(f) *Crotch Serve.* If the served ball hits the crotch in the front wall it is considered the same as hitting the floor and is an out. A crotch serve into the back wall is good and in play.

Rule 4. 7-Return of Serve. (a) *Receiving Position.* The receiver or receivers must stand at least 5 feet back of the short line, as indicated by the 3 inch vertical line on each side wall, and cannot return the ball until it passes the short line. Any infraction results in a point for the server.

(b) *Defective Serve.* To eliminate any misunderstanding, the receiving side should not catch or touch a defectively served ball until called by the referee or it has touched the floor the second time.

(c) *Fly Return.* In making a fly return the receiver must end up with both feet back of the service zone. A violation by a receiver results in a point for the server.

(d) *Legal Return.* After the ball is legally served, one of the players on the receiving side must strike the ball with his racquet either on the fly or after the first bounce and before the ball touches the floor the second time to return the ball to the front wall either directly or after touching one or both side walls, the back wall or the ceiling, or any combination of those surfaces. A returned ball may not touch the floor before touching the front wall. (1) It is legal to return the ball by striking the ball into the back wall first, then hitting the front wall on the fly or after hitting the side wall or ceiling.

(e) *Failure to Return.* The failure to return a serve results in a point for the server.

Rule 4. 8-Changes of Serve. (a) *Hand-out.* A server is entitled to continue serving until:

(1) *Out Serve.* He makes an out serve under Rule 4.6 or
(2) *Fault Serves.* He makes two fault serves in succession under Rule 4.5, or

(3) *Hits Partner.* He hits his partner with an attempted return before the ball touches the floor the second time.

(4) *Return Failure.* He or his partner fails to keep the ball in play by returning it as required by Rule 4. 7(d).

(5) *Avoidable Hinder.* He or his partner commits an avoidable hinder under Rule 4.11.

(b) *Side-out* (1) *In Singles.* In singles, retiring the server retires the side.

(2) *In Doubles.* In doubles, the side is retired when both partners have been put out, except on the first serve as provided in Rule 4.2 (a).

(c) *Effect.* When the server or the side loses the serve, the server or serving side shall become the receiver; and the receiving side, the server; and so alternately in all subsequent services of the game:

Rule 4. 9-Volleys. Each legal return after the serve is called a volley. Play during volleys shall be according to the following rules:

(a) *One or both Hands.* Only the head of the racquet may be used at any time to return the ball. The ball must be hit with the racquet in one or both hands. Switching hands to hit a ball is out. The use of any portion of the body is an out.

(b) *One Touch.* In attempting returns, the ball may be touched only once by one player on returning side. In doubles both partners may swing at, but only one, may hit the ball. Each violation of (a) or (b) results in a handout or point.

(c) *Return Attempts.* (1) In Singles. In singles if a player swings at but misses the ball in play, the player may repeat his attempts to return the ball until it touches the floor the second time.

(2) *In Doubles.* In doubles if one player swings at but misses the ball, both he and his partner may make further attempts to return the ball until it touches the floor the second time. Both partners on a side are entitled to an attempt to return the ball.

(3) *Hinders.* In singles or doubles, if a player swings at but misses the ball in play, and in his, or his partner's attempt again to play the ball there is an unintentional interference by an opponent it shall be a hinder. (See Rule 4. 10).

(d) *Touching Ball.* Except as provided in Rule 4. 10(a) (2), any touching of a ball before it touches the floor the second time by a player other than the one making a return is a point or out against the offending player.

(e) *Out of Court Ball.* (1) After Return. Any ball returned to the front wall which on the rebound or on the first bounce goes into the gallery or through any opening in a side wall shall be declared dead and the serve replayed.

(2) *No Return.* Any ball not returned to the front wall, but which caroms off a player's racquet into the gallery or into any opening in a side wall either with or without touching the ceiling, side or back wall, shall be an out or point against the players failing to make the return.

(f) *Dry Ball.* During the game and particularly on service every effort should be made to keep the ball dry. Deliberately wetting shall result in an out. The ball may be inspected by the referee at any time during a game.

(g) *Broken Ball.* If there is any suspicion that a ball has broken on the serve or during a volley, play shall continue until the end of the volley. The referee or any player may

request the ball be examined. If the referee decides the ball is broken or otherwise defective, a new ball shall be put into play and the point replayed.

(b) *Play Stoppage.* (1) If a player loses a shoe or other equipment, or foreign objects enter the court, or any other outside interference occurs, the referee shall stop the play. (2) If a player loses control of his racquet, time should be called after the point has been decided, providing the racquet does not strike an opponent or interfere with ensuing play.

Rule 4. 10-Dead Ball Hinders. Hinders are of two types — “dead ball” and “avoidable.” Dead ball hinders as described in this rule results in the point being replayed. Avoidable hinders are described in Rule 4.11.

(a) *Situations.* When called by the referee, the following are dead ball hinders:

(1) *Court Hinders.* Hits any part of the court which under local rules is a dead ball.

(2) *Hitting Opponent.* Any returned ball that touches an opponent on the fly before it returns to the front wall.

(3) *Body Contact.* Any body contact with an opponent that interferes with seeing or returning the ball.

(4) *Screen Ball.* Any ball rebounding from the front wall close to the body of a player on the side which just returned the ball, to interfere with or prevent the returning side from seeing the ball. See rule 4.4 (b).

(5) *Straddle Ball.* A ball passing between the legs of a player on the side which just returned the ball, if there is no fair chance to see or return the ball.

(6) *Other Interference.* Any other unintentional interference which prevents an opponent from having a fair chance to see or return the ball.

(b) *Effect.* A call by the referee of a "hinder" stops the play and voids any situation following, such as the ball hitting a player. No player is authorized to call a hinder, except on the back swing and such a call must be made immediately as provided in Rule 3.5 (b).

(c) *Avoidance.* While making an attempt to return the ball, a player is entitled to a fair chance to see and return the ball. It is the duty of the side that has just served or returned the ball to move so that the receiving side may go straight to the ball and not be required to go around an opponent. The referee should be liberal in calling hinders to discourage any practice of playing the ball where an adversary cannot see it until too late. It is no excuse that the ball is "killed," unless in the opinion of the referee he couldn't return the ball. Hinders should be called without a claim by a player, especially in close plays and on game points.

(d) *In Doubles.* In doubles, both players on a side are entitled to a fair and unobstructed chance at the ball and either one is entitled to a hinder even though it naturally would be his partner's ball and even though his partner may have attempted to play the ball or that he may already have missed it. It is not a hinder when one player hinders his partner.

Rule 4. 11-Avoidable Hinders. An avoidable hinder results in an "out" or a point depending upon whether the offender was serving or receiving.

(a) *Failure to Move.* Does not move sufficiently to allow opponent his shot.

(b) *Blocking.* Moves into a position effecting a block, on the opponent about to return the ball, or, in doubles, one partner moves in front of an opponent as his partner is returning the ball, or

(c) *Moving into Ball.* Moves in the way and is struck by the ball just played by his opponent.

(d) *Pushing.* Deliberately pushing or shoving an opponent during a volley.

Rule 12-Rest Periods. (a) *Delays.* Deliberate delay exceeding ten seconds by server, or receiver shall result in an out of point against the offender.

(b) *During Game.* During a game each player in singles, or each side in doubles, either while serving or receiving may request a "time out" for a towel, wiping glasses, change or adjustment. Each "time out" shall not exceed 30 seconds. No more than three "time outs" in a game shall be granted each singles players or each team in doubles.

(c) *Injury.* No time out shall be charged to a player who is injured during play. An injured player shall not be allowed more than a total of fifteen minutes of rest. If the injured player is not able to resume play after total rests of 15 minutes the match shall be awarded to the opponent or opponents. On any further injury to same player, the Commissioner, if present, or committee, after considering any available medical opinion shall determine whether the injured player will be allowed to continue.

(d) *Between Games.* A two minute rest period is allowed between the first and second games, at which times the players should NOT leave the court, without approval of the referee. A ten minute rest period is allowed between the second and third games, at which time players may leave the court.

(e) *Postponed Games.* Any games postponed by referee due to weather elements shall be resumed with the same score as when postponed.

Rule 4. 13-Masters. Forty will be minimum age for all competition in singles. In doubles, one participant — 40 minimum, the second must be 45 years of age.

PART V. TOURNAMENTS

Rule 5. 1-Draws. If possible, the singles draw shall be made at least two days before the tournament commences. The seeding method of drawing shall be approved by the committee or chairman.

Rule 5. 2-Scheduling (a) Preliminary Matches. If one or more contestants are entered in both singles and doubles they may be required to play both singles and doubles on the same day or night with little rest between matches. This is a risk assumed on entering both singles and doubles. If possible the schedule should provide at least a one hour rest period between all matches.

(b) Final Matches. Where one or more players have reached the finals in both singles and doubles, it is recommended that the doubles match be played on the day preceding the singles. This would assume more rest between the final matches. If both final matches must be played on the same day or night, the following procedure is recommended:

(1) The singles match be played first.

(2) A rest period of not less than ONE HOUR be allowed between the finals in singles and doubles.

Rule 5. 3-Notice of Matches. After the first round of matches, it is the responsibility of each player to check the posted schedules to determine the time and place of each subsequent match. If any change is made in the schedule after posting, it shall be the duty of the committee or chairman to notify the players of the change.

Rule 5. 4-Third Place. In championship tournaments: national, state, district, etc., the loser in the semi-finals must play for third place or lose his ranking for the next year unless he is unable to compete because of injury or illness. See Rule 3.5 (d) (4).

Rule 5. 5-IRA Divisional Tournaments. Starting in 1969-70 the United States was divided into four divisions. A map

defining the boundary lines of each division will be defined and made available to IRA "Divisional Directors" who will sponsor tournaments.

(a) Only players residing in the area defined can participate in a division tournament.

(b) Players can participate in only one event in a division tournament.

(c) Winners of singles (not Masters singles or doubles) of divisional tournaments will receive round trip air coach tickets to the IRA national tourney. Remuneration will be made after arrival at the nationals.

(d) An IRA national officer will be in attendance at each divisional tournament and will coordinate with the host chairman.

Awards: No individual award in IRA-sanctioned tournaments should exceed value of more than \$25.

Tournament Management: In all IRA-sanctioned tournaments the tournament chairman and/or the national IRA official in attendance may decide on a change of courts after the completion of any tournament game if such a change will accommodate better spectator conditions.


Tournament Conduct: In all IRA-sanctioned tournaments the referee is empowered to default a match if an individual player or team conducts itself to the detriment of the tournament and the game.

Amateur Definition: We hold as eligible for racquetball tournaments anyone except those who engage in, or promote racquetball for a profit.

Pick-A-Partner: The essence of the "Players' Fraternity" has been to allow players to come to tournaments and select a partner, if necessary, regardless what organization or city he might represent.

ONE-WALL AND THREE-WALL RULES

Basically racquetball rules for one-wall, three-wall and four-wall are the same with the following exceptions:

ONE-WALL — Court Size — Wall shall be  in width and 16 ft. high, floor 20 ft. in width and 34 ft. from the wall to the back edge of the long line. There should be a minimum of 3 feet beyond the long line and 6 feet outside each side line. There should be minimum of six feet outside each side line and behind the long line to permit movement area for the players.

Short Line — Back edge 16 feet from the wall. *Service Markers* — Lines at least 6 inches long parallel to and midway between the long and short lines, extending in from the side lines. The imaginary extension and joining of these lines indicates the service line. Lines are 1½ inches in width. *Service Zone* — floor area inside and including the short, side and service lines. *Receiving Zone* — floor area in back of short line bounded by and including the long and side lines.

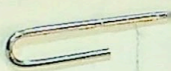
THREE-WALL — Serve — A serve that goes beyond the side walls on the fly is player or side out. A serve that goes beyond the long line on a fly but within the side walls is the same as a "short."





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