

# 1994 OFFICIAL RULES OF RACQUETBALL

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## RULE CHANGES

(Effective September 1993)	
Penalty imposed for illegal racquet use — See Rule 2.4 (a) for specific wording .....	33
Serving before the receiver is ready is now a fault — See Rule 4.5 (b) for specific wording .....	35
Men's Professional rules added See Ruling Section 12 for details .....	41
(Effective May 1994) The experimental "one-serve" modification, in open divisions only, was extended through September 1, 1995. See <i>RACQUETBALL Magazine</i> "What's the Call" (March/April '94, pg.53) for details.	

## 1 — 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. A non-tournament variation of the game that is played by three players is called cutthroat.

### Rule 1.2 DESCRIPTION

Racquetball is a competitive game in which a strung racquet is used to serve and return the ball.

### Rule 1.3 OBJECTIVE

The objective is to win each rally by serving or returning the ball so the opponent is unable to keep the ball in play. A rally is over when a player (or team in doubles) is unable to hit the ball before it touches the floor twice, is unable to return the ball in such a manner that it touches the front wall before it touches the floor, or when a hinder is called.

### Rule 1.4 POINTS AND OUTS

Points are scored only by the serving side when it serves an irretrievable serve (an ace) or wins a rally. Losing the serve is called a sideout in singles. In doubles, when the first server loses the serve it is called a handout and when the second server loses the serve it is a sideout.

### Rule 1.5 MATCH, GAME, TIEBREAKER

A match is won by the first side winning two games. The first two games of a match are played to 15 points. If each side wins one game, a tiebreaker game is played to 11 points.

### Rule 1.6 DOUBLES TEAM

(a) A doubles team shall consist of two players who meet either the age requirements or player classification requirements to participate in a particular division of play. A team with different skill levels must play in the division of the player with the higher level of ability. When playing in an adult age division, the team must play in the division of the younger player. When playing in a junior age division, the team must play in the division of the older player.

(b) A change in playing partners may be made so long as the first match of the posted team has not begun. For this purpose only the match will be considered started once the teams have been called to the court. The team must notify the tournament director of the change prior to the beginning of the match.

### Rule 1.7 CONSOLATION MATCHES

(a) Each entrant shall be entitled to participate in a minimum of two matches. Therefore, losers of their first match shall have the opportunity to compete in a consolation bracket of their own division. In draws of less than seven players, a round robin may be offered. See Rule 5.5 about how to determine the winner of a round robin event.

(b) Consolation matches may be waived at the discretion of the tournament director, but this waiver must be in writing on the tournament application.

(c) Preliminary consolation matches will be two of three games to 11 points. Semifinal and final matches will follow the regular scoring format.

## 2 — COURTS AND EQUIPMENT

### Rule 2.1 COURT SPECIFICATIONS

The specifications for the standard four-wall racquetball court are:

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

surfaces shall be in play, with the exception of any gallery opening or surfaces designated as court hinders.

(b) Markings. Racquetball courts shall be marked with lines 1/2 inches wide as follows:

1. **Short Line.** The back edge of the short line is midway between, and is parallel with, the front and back walls.

2. **Service Line.** The front edge of the service line is parallel with, and five feet in front of, the back edge of the short line.

3. **Service Zone.** The service zone is the five-foot area between the outer edges of the short line and service line.

4. **Service Boxes.** The service boxes are located at each end of the service zone and are designated by lines parallel with the side walls. The edge of the line nearest to the center of the court shall be 18 inches from the nearest side wall.

5. **Drive Serve Lines.** The drive serve lines, which form the drive serve zone, are parallel with the side wall and are within the service zone. The edge of the line nearest to the center of the court shall be three feet from the nearest side wall.

6. **Receiving Line.** The receiving line is a broken line parallel to the short line. The back edge of the receiving line is five feet from the back edge of the short line.

The receiving line begins with a line 21 inches long that extends from each side wall. These lines are connected by an alternate series of six-inch spaces and six-inch lines. This will result in a line composed of 17 six-inch spaces, 16 six-inch lines, and two 21-inch lines.

7. **Safety Zone.** The safety zone is the five-foot area bounded by the back edges of the short line and the receiving line. The zone is observed only during the serve. See Rules 4.11(k) and 4.12.

### Rule 2.2 BALL SPECIFICATIONS

(a) The standard racquetball shall be 2 1/4 inches in diameter; weigh approximately 1.4 ounces; have a hardness of 55-60 inches durometer; and bounce 68-72 inches from a 100-inch drop at a temperature of 70-74 degrees Fahrenheit.

(b) Only a ball having the endorsement or approval of the AARA may be used in an AARA sanctioned tournament.

### Rule 2.3 BALL SELECTION

(a) A ball shall be selected by the referee for use in each match. During the match the referee may, at his discretion or at the request of a player or team, replace the ball. Balls that are not round or which bounce erratically shall not be used.

(b) If possible, the referee and players should agree to an alternate ball, so that in the event of breakage, the second ball can be put into play immediately.

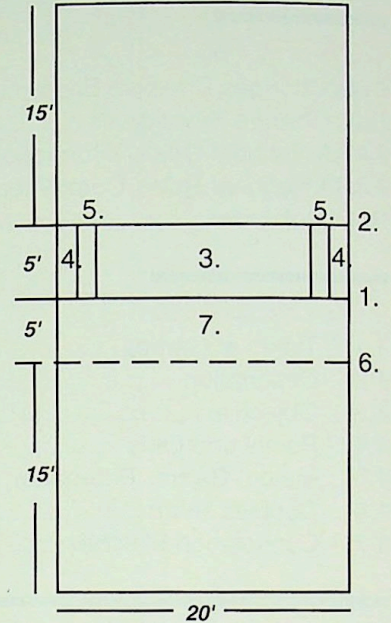
### Rule 2.4 RACQUET SPECIFICATIONS

(a) The racquet, including bumper guard and all solid parts of the handle, may not exceed 21 inches in length.

(b) The racquet frame may be any material judged to be safe.

(c) The racquet frame must include a thong that must be securely attached to the player's wrist.

(d) The string of the racquet should be gut, monofilament, nylon,



graphite, plastic, metal, or a combination thereof, providing the strings do not mark or deface the ball.

(e) Using an illegal racquet will result in forfeiture of the game in progress or, if discovered between games, forfeiture of the preceding game.

### **Rule 2.5 APPAREL**

(a) Lensed Eyewear Required. Lensed eyewear designed for racquet sports is required apparel for all players. The protective eyewear must be worn as designed and may not be altered. Players who require corrective eyewear also must wear lensed eyewear designed for racquet sports. Failure to wear protective eyewear will result in a technical foul and the player will be charged with a timeout to secure eyewear. The second infraction in the same match will result in immediate forfeiture of the match. (See Rule 4.18(a)(9). Note: A list of approved eyewear is available by writing the AARA National Office. The AARA recommends that players select eyewear with polycarbonate plastic lenses with 3-mm center thickness.

(b) Clothing and Shoes. The clothing may be of any color; however, a player may be required to change wet, extremely loose fitting, or otherwise distracting garments. Insignias and writing on the clothing must be considered to be in good taste by the tournament director. Shoes must have soles which do not mark or damage the floor.

(c) Equipment Requirements During Warm-up. Approved eyeguards must be worn and wrist thongs must be used during any on-court warm-up period. The referee should give a technical warning to any person who fails to comply and assess a technical foul if that player continues to not comply after receiving such a warning.

## **3 — OFFICIATING**

### **Rule 3.1 TOURNAMENT MANAGEMENT**

All AARA sanctioned tournaments shall be managed by a tournament director, who shall designate the officials.

### **Rule 3.2 TOURNAMENT RULES COMMITTEE**

The tournament director may appoint a tournament rules committee to resolve any disputes that the referee, tournament desk, or tournament director cannot resolve. The committee, composed of an odd number of persons, may include state or national officials, or other qualified individuals in attendance who are prepared to meet on short notice. The tournament director should not be a member of this committee.

### **Rule 3.3 REFEREE APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL**

The principal official for every match shall be the referee who has been designated by the tournament director, or his designated representative, and who has been agreed upon by all participants in the match. The referee's authority regarding a match begins once the players are called to the court. The referee may be removed from a match upon the agreement of all participants (teams in doubles) or at the discretion of the tournament director or his designated representative. In the event that a referee's removal is requested by one player or team and not agreed to by the other, the tournament director or his designated representative may accept or reject the request. It is suggested that the match be observed before determining what, if any, action is to be taken. In addition, two line judges and a scorekeeper may also be designated to assist the referee in officiating the match.

### **Rule 3.4 RULES BRIEFING**

Before all tournaments, all officials and players shall be briefed on rules as well as local court hindrances, regulations, and modifications the tournament director wishes to impose. The briefing should be reduced to writing. The current AARA rules will apply and be made available. Any modifications the

tournament director wishes to impose must be stated on the entry form and be available to all players at registration.

### **Rule 3.5 REFEREES**

(a) Pre-Match Duties. Before each match begins, it shall be the duty of the referee to:

1. Check on adequacy of preparation of court with respect to cleanliness, lighting and temperature.
2. Check on availability and suitability of materials—to include balls, towels, scorecards, pencils and timepiece—necessary for the match.
3. Check the readiness and qualifications of the line judges and scorekeeper. Review appeal procedures and instruct them of their duties, rules and local regulations.
4. Go onto the court to introduce himself and the players; brief the players on court hindrances, local regulations, rule modifications for this tournament; explain misinterpreted rules.
5. Inspect players' equipment; identify the line judges; verify selection of a primary and alternate ball.
6. Toss coin and offer the winner the choice of serving or receiving.

(b) Decisions. During the match, the referee shall make all decisions with regard to the rules. Where line judges are used, the referee shall announce all final judgments. If both players in singles and three out of four in a doubles match disagree with a call made by the referee, the referee is overruled (with the exception of technical fouls and forfeitures).

(c) Protests. Any decision not involving the judgment of the referee will, on protest, be accorded due process as set forth in the by-laws of the AARA. For the purposes of rendering a prompt decision regarding protests filed during the course of an ongoing tournament, the stages of due process will be first to the tournament director and second to the tournament rules committee. In those instances when time permits, the protest may be elevated to the state association and then to the National Board of Directors in the manner prescribed in the by-laws.

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

1. Any player refuses to abide by the referee's decision or engages in unsportsmanlike conduct.
2. Any player or team who fails to report to play 10 minutes after the match has been scheduled to play. (The tournament director may permit a longer delay if circumstances warrant such a decision.)

(e) Defaults. A player or team may be forfeited by the tournament director or official for failure to comply with the tournament or host facility's rules while on the premises between matches, or for abuse of hospitality, locker room, or other rules and procedures.

(f) Spectators. The referee shall have jurisdiction over the spectators, as well as the players, while the match is in progress.

(g) Other Rulings. The referee may rule on all matters not covered in the AARA Official Rules. However, the referee's ruling is subject to protest as described in Rule 3.5(c).

### **Rule 3.6 LINE JUDGES**

(a) When Utilized. Two line judges should be used for semifinal and final matches, when requested by a player or team, or when the referee or tournament director so desires. However, the use of line judges is subject to availability and the discretion of the tournament director.

(b) Replacing Line Judges. If any player objects to a person serving as a line judge before the match begins, all reasonable effort shall be made to find a replacement acceptable to the officials and players. If a player objects after the match begins, any replacement shall be at the discretion of the referee and/or tournament director.

(c) Position of Line Judges. The players and referee shall designate the court location of the line judges. Any dispute shall be settled by the tournament director.

(d) Duties and Responsibilities. Line judges are designated to help decide appealed calls. In the event of an appeal, and after a very brief explanation of the appeal by the referee, the line judges must indicate their opinion of the referee's call.

(e) Signals. Line judges should extend their arm and signal as follows: (i) thumb up to show agreement with the referee's call, (ii) thumb down to show disagreement, and (iii) hand open with palm facing down to indicate "no opinion" or that the play in question wasn't seen.

(f) Manner of Response. Line judges should be careful not to signal until the referee acknowledges the appeal and asks for a

ruling. In responding to the referee's request, line judges should not look at each other, but indicate their opinions simultaneously in clear view of the players and referee. If at any time a line judge is unsure of which call is being appealed or what the referee's call was, the line judge should ask the referee to repeat the call and the appeal.

(g) Result of Response. If both line judges signal no opinion, the referee's call stands. If both line judges disagree with the referee, the referee must reverse the ruling. If one line judge agrees with the call and one disagrees, the referee's call stands. If one line judge agrees with the call and one has no opinion, the call stands. If one line judge disagrees with the referee's call and the other signals no opinion, the rally is replayed. Any replays, with the exception of appeals on the second serve itself, will result in two serves.

### **Rule 3.7 APPEALS**

(a) Appealable Calls and Non-Calls. In any match using line judges, a player may appeal only the following calls or noncalls by the referee: skip ball; fault serve, except screen serves; out serve; double bounce pickup; receiving line violation; and court hinder. At no time may a player appeal a screen serve, a hinder call (except court hinders), a technical foul, or other discretionary call of the referee.

(b) How to Appeal. A verbal appeal by a player must be made directly to the referee immediately after the rally has ended. A player who believes there is an infraction to appeal, should bring it to the attention of the referee and line judges by raising his non-racquet hand at the time the perceived infraction occurs. The player is obligated to continue to play until the rally has ended or the referee stops play. The referee will recognize a player's appeal only if it is made before that player leaves the court for any reason including timeouts and game-ending rallies or, if that player doesn't leave the court, before the next serve begins.

(c) Loss of Appeal. A player or team forfeits its right of appeal for that rally if the appeal is made directly to the line judges or, if the appeal is made after an excessive demonstration or complaint.

(d) Limit on Appeals. A player or team may make three appeals per game. However, if either line judge disagrees (thumb down) with the referee's call, that appeal will not count against the three-appeal limit. In addition, the game-ending rally may be appealed even if the three-appeal limit has been reached.

### **Rule 3.8 OUTCOME OF APPEALS**

(a) Skip Ball. If the referee makes a call of "skip ball", the call may be appealed. If the call is reversed, the referee then must decide if the shot in question could have been returned had play continued. If in the opinion of the referee, the shot could have been returned, the rally shall be replayed. However, if the shot was not retrievable, the side which hit the shot in question is declared the winner of the rally. If the referee makes no call on a shot (thereby indicating that the shot did not skip), an appeal may be made that the shot skipped. If the no call is reversed, the side which hit the shot in question loses the rally.

(b) Fault Serve. If the referee makes a call of fault serve, the call may be appealed. If the call is reversed, the serve is replayed, unless if the referee considered the serve to be not retrievable, in which case a point is awarded to the server. An appeal may also be made if the referee makes no call on a serve (indicating that the serve was good.) If the no call is reversed, it will result in second serve if the infraction occurred on the first serve or loss of serve if the infraction occurred on the second serve.

(c) Out Serve. If the referee makes a call of out serve, the call may be appealed. If the call is reversed, the serve will be replayed, unless the serve was obviously a fault in which case the call becomes fault serve. However, when the call is reversed and the serve is considered an ace, a point will be awarded. An appeal may also be made if the referee makes no call on a serve (indicating that the serve was good.) If the no call is reversed, it results in an immediate loss of serve.

(d) Double Bounce Pickup. If the referee makes a call of two bounces, the call may be appealed. If the call is reversed, the rally is replayed, except if the player against whom the call was made hit a shot that could not have been retrieved, then that player wins the rally. (Before awarding a rally in that situation, the referee must be certain that the shot would not have been retrieved even

if play had not been halted.) An appeal may also be made if the referee makes no call thereby indicating that the get was not two bounces. If the no call is reversed, the player who made the two bounce pickup is declared the loser of the rally.

(e) Receiving Line Violation (Encroachment). If the referee makes a call of encroachment, the call may be appealed. If the call is overturned, the service shall be replayed. An appeal may also be made if the referee makes no call. If the appeal is successful, the server is awarded a point.

(f) Court Hinder. If the referee makes a call of court hinder, the rally is replayed. If the referee makes no call and a player feels that a court hinder occurred, that player may appeal. If the appeal is successful, the rally will be replayed.

## **Rule 3.9 RULES INTERPRETATIONS**

If a player feels the referee has interpreted the rules incorrectly, the player may require the referee or tournament director to show him the applicable rule in the rulebook. Having discovered a misapplication or misinterpretation, the official must correct the error by replaying the rally, awarding the point, calling sideout or taking whatever corrective measure necessary.

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## **4 — PLAY REGULATIONS**

### **Rule 4.1 SERVE**

The player or team winning the coin toss has the option to either serve or receive at the start of the first game. The second game will begin in reverse order of the first game. The player or team scoring the highest total of points in games 1 and 2 will have the option to serve or receive first at the start of the tiebreaker. In the event that both players or teams score an equal number of points in the first two games, another coin toss will take place and the winner of the toss will have the option to serve or receive.

### **Rule 4.2 START**

The server may not start the service motion until the referee has called the score or "second serve". The serve is started from any place within the service zone. (Certain drive serves are an exception, see Rule 4.6.) Neither the ball, nor any part of either foot may extend beyond either line of the service zone when initiating the service motion. Stepping on, but not over, the lines is permitted. When completing the service motion, the server may step over the service (front) line provided that some part of both feet remain on or inside the line until the served ball passes the short line. The server may not step over the short line until the ball passes the short line. See Rules 4.10(a) and 4.11(k) for penalties for violations.

### **Rule 4.3 MANNER**

After taking a set position inside the service zone, a player may begin the service motion—any continuous movement which results in the ball being served. Once the service motion begins, the ball must be bounced on the floor in the zone and be struck by the racquet before it bounces a second time. After being struck, the ball must hit the front wall first and on the rebound hit the floor beyond the back edge of the short line, either with or without touching one of the side walls.

### **Rule 4.4 READINESS**

The service motion shall not begin until the referee has called the score or the second serve and the server has visually checked the receiver. The referee shall call the score as both server and receiver prepare to return to their respective positions, shortly after the previous rally has ended.

### **Rule 4.5 DELAYS**

Except as noted in Rule 4.5(b), delays exceeding 10 seconds

shall result in an out if the server is the offender or a point if the receiver is the offender.

(a) The 10 second rule is applicable to the server and receiver simultaneously. Collectively, they are allowed up to 10 seconds, after the score is called, to serve or be ready to receive. It is the server's responsibility to look and be certain the receiver is ready. If the receiver is not ready, he must signal so by raising his racquet above his head or completely turning his back to the server. (These are the only two acceptable signals.)

(b) Serving while the receiving player/team is signalling *not ready* is a fault serve.

(c) After the score is called, if the server looks at the receiver and the receiver is not signalling not ready, the server may then serve. If the receiver attempts to signal not ready after that point, the signal shall not be acknowledge and the serve becomes legal.

#### **Rule 4.6 DRIVE SERVICE ZONES**

The drive serve lines will be three feet from each side wall in the service box, dividing the service area into two 17-foot service zones for drive serves only. The player may drive serve to the same side of the court on which he is standing, so long as the start and finish of the service motion takes place outside the drive serve zone. Violations of this rule, either called or not called, may be appealed.

(a) The drive serve zones are not observed for crosscourt drive serves, the hard-Z, soft-Z, lob or half-lob serves.

(b) The racquet may not break the plane of the 17-foot zone while making contact with the ball.

(c) The drive serve line is not part of the 17-foot zone. Dropping the ball on the line or standing on the line while serving to the same side is an infraction.

#### **Rule 4.7 SERVE IN DOUBLES**

(a) Order of Serve. Each team shall inform the referee of the order of service which shall be followed throughout that game. The order of serve may be changed between games. At the beginning of each game, when the first server of the first team to serve is out, the team is out. Thereafter, both players on each team shall serve until the team receives a hand-out and a sideout.

(b) Partner's Position. On each serve, the server's partner shall stand erect with back to the side wall and with both feet on the floor within the service box from the moment the server begins the service motion until the served ball passes the short line. Violations are called foot faults. However, if the server's partner enters the safety zone before the ball passes the short line, the server loses service.

#### **Rule 4.8 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 canceling a prior fault serve).

(b) Fault Serve. Two fault serves result in an out (either a sideout or a handout.)

(c) Out Serve. An out serve results in an out (either a sideout or a handout.)

#### **Rule 4.9 DEAD-BALL SERVES**

Dead-ball serves do not cancel any previous fault serve. The following are dead-ball serves:

(a) Ball Hits Partner. A serve which strikes the server's partner while in the doubles box is a dead-ball serve. A serve which touches the floor before touching the server's partner is a short serve.

(b) Court Hinders. A serve that takes an irregular bounce because it hit a wet spot or an irregular surface on the court is a dead-ball serve. Also, any serve that hits any surface designated by local rules as an obstruction.

(c) Broken Ball. If the ball is determined to have broken on the serve, a new ball shall be substituted and the serve shall be replayed, not canceling any prior fault serve.

#### **Rule 4.10 FAULT SERVES**

The following serves are faults and any two in succession result in an out:

(a) Foot Faults. A foot fault results when:  
1. *The server does not begin the service motion*

*with both feet in the service zone.*

2. *The server steps completely over the service line (no part of the foot on or inside the service zone) before the served ball crosses the short line.*

3. *In doubles, the server's partner is not in the service box with both feet on the floor and back to the side wall from the time the server begins the service motion until the ball passes the short line. See Rule 4.7(b).*

(b) Short Service. A short serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and, on the rebound, hits the floor on or in front of the short line either with or without touching a side wall.

(c) Three Wall Serve. A three-wall serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and, on the rebound, strikes both side walls before touching the floor.

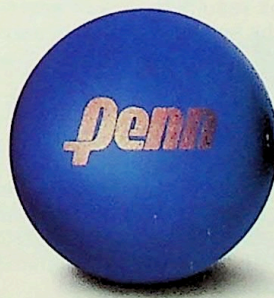
(d) Ceiling Serve. A ceiling serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and then touches the ceiling (with or without touching a side wall).

(e) Long Serve. A long serve is a served ball that first hits the front wall and rebounds to the back wall before touching the floor (with or without touching a side wall).

(f) Out-of-Court Serve. An out-of-court serve is any served ball that first hits the wall and, before striking the floor, goes out of the court.

(g) Bouncing Ball Outside Service Zone. Bouncing the ball outside the service zone

# BE FAST, OR BE GONE.



In a game where serves have been clocked at over 180 mph, that rule applies equally to players and balls. Any questions?

*The Official Ball of the AARA.*

as a part of the service motion is a *fault serve*.

(h) *Illegal Drive Serve*. A drive serve in which the player fails to observe the 17-foot drive service zone outlined in Rule 4.6.

(i) *Screen Serve*. A served ball that first hits the front wall and on the rebound passes so closely to the server, or server's partner in doubles, that it prevents the receiver from having a clear view of the ball. (The receiver is obligated to place himself in good court position, near center court, to obtain that view.) The screen serve is the only fault serve which may not be appealed.

(j) *Serving before the Receiver is Ready*. A serve is made while the receiver is not ready as described in Rule 4.5.

#### **Rule 4.11 OUT SERVES**

Any of the following serves results in an out:

(a) *Two Consecutive Fault Serves*. See Rule 4.10.

(b) *Failure to Serve*. Failure of server to put the ball into play under Rule 4.5.

(c) *Missed Serve Attempt*. Any attempt to strike the ball that results in a total miss or in the ball touching any part of the server's body. Also, allowing the ball to bounce more than once during the service motion.

(d) *Touched Serve*. Any served ball that on the rebound from the front wall touches the server or server's racquet, or any ball intentionally stopped or caught by the server or server's partner.

(e) *Fake or Balk Serve*. Any movement of the racquet toward the ball during the serve which is noncontinuous and done for the purpose of deceiving the receiver. If a balk serve occurs, but the referee believes that no deceit was involved, he has the option of declaring "no serve" and have the serve replayed without penalty.

(f) *Illegal Hit*. An illegal hit includes contacting the ball twice, carrying the ball, or hitting the ball with the handle of the racquet or part of the body or uniform.

(g) *Non-Front Wall Serve*. Any served ball that does not strike the front wall first.

(h) *Crotch Serve*. Any served ball that hits the crotch of the front wall and floor, front wall and side wall, or front wall and ceiling is an out serve (because it did not hit the front wall first). A serve into the crotch of the back wall and floor is a good serve and in play. A served ball that hits the crotch of the side wall and floor beyond the short line is in play.

(i) *Out-of-Order Serve*. In doubles, when either partner serves out of order, the points scored by that server will be subtracted and an out serve will be called: if the second server serves out of order, the out serve will be applied to the first server and the second server will resume serving. If the player designated as the first server serves out of order, a sideout will be called. The referee should call no serve as soon as an out-of-order serve occurs. If no points are scored while the team is out of order, only the out penalty will have to be assessed. However, if points are scored before the out of order condition is noticed and the referee cannot recall the number, the referee may enlist the aid of the line judges (if they are being used) to recall the number of points to be deducted.

(j) *Ball Hits Partner*. A served ball that hits the doubles partner while outside the doubles box results in loss of serve.

(k) *Safety Zone Violation*. If the server, or doubles partner, enters into the safety zone before the served ball passes the short line, it shall result in the loss of serve.

#### **Rule 4.12 RETURN OF SERVE**

(a) *Receiving Position*

1. *The receiver may not enter the safety zone until the ball bounces or crosses the receiving line.*

2. *On the fly return attempt, the receiver may not strike the ball until the ball breaks the plane of the receiving line. The receiver's follow-through may carry the receiver or his racquet past the receiving line.*

3. *Neither the receiver nor his racquet may break the plane of the short line, except if the ball is struck after rebounding off the back wall.*

4. *Any violation by the receiver results in a point for the server.*

(b) *Defective Serve*. A player on the receiving side may not intentionally catch or touch a served ball (such as an apparently long or short serve) until the referee has made a call or the ball has touched the floor for a second time. Violation results in a point.

(c) *Legal Return*. After a legal serve, a player on the receiving team must strike the ball on the fly or after the first bounce, and

before the ball touches the floor the second time; and 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 must touch the front wall before touching the floor.

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

(e) *Other Provisions*. Except as noted in this rule (4.12), the return of serve is subject to all provisions of Rules 4.14 through 4.16.

#### **Rule 4.13 CHANGES OF SERVE**

(a) *Outs*. A server is entitled to continue serving until:

1. *Out Serve*. See Rule 4.11.

2. *Two Consecutive Fault Serves*. See Rule 4.10.

3. *Ball Hits Partner*. Player hits partner with attempted return.

4. *Failure to Return Ball*. Player, or partner, fails to keep the ball in play as required by Rule 4.12(c).

5. *Avoidable Hinder*. Player or partner commits an avoidable hinder which results in an out. See Rule 4.16.

(b) *Sideout*. In singles, retiring the server is a sideout. In doubles, the side is retired when both partners have lost service, except that the team which serves first at the beginning of each game loses the serve when the first server is retired. See Rule 4.7.

(c) *Effect of Sideout*. When the server (or serving team) receives a sideout, the server becomes the receiver and the receiver becomes the server.

#### **Rule 4.14 RALLIES**

All of the play which occurs after the successful return of serve is called the rally. Play shall be conducted according to the following rules:

(a) *Legal Hits*. Only the head of the racquet may be used at any time to return the ball. The racquet may be held in one or both hands. Switching hands to hit a ball, touching the ball with any part of the body or uniform, or removing the wrist thong results in a loss of the rally.

(b) *One Touch*. The player or team trying to return the ball may touch or strike the ball only once or else the rally is lost. The ball may not be carried. (A carried ball is one which rests on the racquet long enough that the effect is more of a sling or throw than a hit.)

(c) *Failure to Return*. Any of the following constitutes a failure to make a legal return during a rally:

1. *The ball bounces on the floor more than once before being hit.*

2. *The ball does not reach the front wall on the fly.*

3. *The ball caroms off a player's racquet into a gallery or wall opening without first hitting the front wall.*

4. *A ball which obviously does not have the velocity or direction to hit the front wall strikes another player.*

5. *A ball struck by one player on a team hits that player or that player's partner.*

6. *Committing an avoidable hinder*. See Rule 4.16.

7. *Switching hands during a rally.*

8. *Failure to use wrist thong on racquet.*

9. *Touching the ball with the body or uniform.*

10. *Carry or sling the ball with the racquet.*

(d) *Effect of Failure to Return*. Violations of Rules 4.14(a) through (c) result in a loss of rally. If the serving player or team loses the rally, it is an out. If the receiver loses the rally, it results in a point for the server.

(e) *Return Attempts*. The ball remains in play until it touches the floor a second time, regardless of how many walls it makes contact with – including the front wall.

1. *In singles, if a player swings at the ball and misses it, the player may continue to attempt to return the ball until it touches the floor for the second time.*

2. *In doubles, if one player swings at the ball and misses it, both partners may make further attempts to return the ball until it touches the floor the second time. Both partners on a side are entitled to return the ball.*

(f) *Out of Court Ball*

1. *After return. Any ball returned to the front wall which, on the rebound or the first bounce, goes into the gallery or through any opening in a side wall shall be declared dead and the server shall receive two serves.*

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 wall, or back wall, shall be an out for the player failing to make the return, or a point for the opponent.

(g) Broken Ball. If there is any suspicion that a ball has broken during a rally, play shall continue until the end of the rally. The referee or any player may request the ball be examined. If the referee decides the ball is broken the ball will be replaced and the rally replayed. The server will get two serves. The only proper way to check for a broken ball is to squeeze it by hand. (Checking the ball by striking it with a racquet will not be considered a valid check and shall work to the disadvantage of the player or team which struck the ball after the rally.)

(h) Play Stoppage

1. If a foreign object enters the court, or any other outside interference occurs, the referee shall stop the play immediately and declare a dead-ball hinder.

2. If a player loses any apparel, equipment, or other article, the referee shall stop play immediately and declare an avoidable hinder or dead-ball hinder as described in Rule 4.16(i).

(i) Replays. Whenever a rally is replayed for any reason, the server is awarded two serves. A previous fault serve is not considered.

#### Rule 4.15 DEAD-BALL HINDERS

A rally is replayed without penalty and the server receives two serves whenever a dead-ball hinder occurs.

(a) Situations

1. Court Hinders. The referee should stop play immediately whenever the ball hits any part of the court that was designated in advance as a court hinder (such as a door handle). The referee should also stop play (i) when the ball takes an irregular bounce as a result of contacting a rough surface (such as court light or vent) or after striking a wet spot on the floor or wall and (ii) when, in the referee's opinion, the irregular bounce affected the rally. A court hinder is the only type of hinder that is appealable. See Rule 3.7(a).

2. Ball Hits Opponent. When an opponent is hit by a return shot in flight, it is a dead-ball hinder. If the opponent is struck by a ball which obviously did not have the velocity or direction to reach the front wall, it is not a hinder, and the player who hit the ball will lose the rally. A player who has been hit by the ball can stop play and make the call though the call must be made immediately and acknowledged by the referee.

3. Body Contact. If body contact occurs which the referee believes was sufficient to stop the rally, either for the purpose of preventing injury by further contact or because the contact prevented a player from being able to make a reasonable return, the referee shall call a hinder. Incidental body contact in which the offensive player clearly will have the advantage should not be called a hinder, unless the offensive player obviously stops play. Contact with the racquet on the follow-through normally is not considered a hinder.

4. Screen Ball. Any ball rebounding from the front wall so close to the body of the defensive team that it interferes with, or prevents, the offensive player from having clear view of the ball. (The referee should be careful not to make the screen call so quickly that it takes away a good offensive opportunity.) A ball that passes between the legs of the side that just returned

the ball is not automatically a screen. It depends on the proximity of the players. Again, the call should work to the advantage of the offensive player.

5. Backswing Hinder. Any body or racquet contact, on the backswing or on the way to or just prior to returning the ball, which impairs the hitter's ability to take a reasonable swing. This call can be made by the player attempting the return, though the call must be made immediately and is subject to the referee's approval. Note the interference may be considered an avoidable hinder. See Rule 4.16.

6. Safety Holdup. Any player about to execute a return who believes he is likely to strike his opponent with the ball or racquet may immediately stop play and request a dead-ball hinder. This call must be made immediately and is subject to acceptance and approval of the referee. (The referee will grant a dead-ball hinder if it is believed the holdup was reasonable and the player would have been able to return the shot, and the referee may also call an avoidable hinder if warranted.)

7. Other Interference. Any other unintentional interference which prevents an opponent from having a fair chance to see or return the ball. Example: When a ball from another court enters the court during a rally or when a referee's call on an adjacent court obviously distracts a player.

(b) Effect of Hinders. The referee's call of hinder stops play and voids any situation which follows, such as the ball hitting the player. The only hinders that may be

called by a player are described in rules (2), (5), and (6) above, and all of these are subject to the approval of the referee. A dead-ball hinder stops play and the rally is replayed. The server receives two serves. (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 responsibility of the side that has just hit the ball to move so the receiving side may go straight to the ball and have an unobstructed view of the ball. In the judgment of the referee however, the receiver must make a reasonable effort to move towards the ball and have a reasonable chance to return the ball in order for a hinder to be called.

#### Rule 4.16 AVOIDABLE HINDERS

An avoidable hinder results in the loss of the rally. An avoidable hinder does not necessarily have to be an intentional act and is the result of any of the following:

(a) Failure to Move. A player does not move sufficiently to allow an opponent a shot straight to the front wall as well as a cross-court shot which is a shot directly to the front wall at an angle that would cause the ball to rebound directly to the rear corner farthest from the player hitting the ball. Also when a player moves in such a direction that it prevents an opponent from taking either of these shots.

# ANYTHING ELSE IS JUST A MITTEN.



The Penn Tac Racquetball Glove has a leather grip and padding in the knuckles. It's the only recommended clothing for serious players that want to smash some balls, not build some snowmen.

The Official Glove of the IRT

(b) Stroke Interference. This occurs when a player moves, or fails to move, so that the opponent returning the ball does not have a free, unimpeded swing. This includes unintentionally moving the wrong direction which prevents an opponent from making an open offensive shot.

(c) Blocking. Moves into a position which blocks the opponent from getting to, or returning, the ball; or in doubles, a player moves in front of an opponent as the player's partner is returning the ball.

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

(e) Pushing. Deliberately pushes or shoves opponent during a rally.

(f) Intentional Distractions. Deliberate shouting, stamping of feet, waiving of racquet, or any other manner of disrupting one's opponent.

(g) View Obstruction. A player moves across an opponent's line of vision just before the opponent strikes the ball.

(h) Wetting the Ball. The players, particularly the server, should insure that the ball is dry prior to the serve. Any wet ball that is not corrected prior to the serve shall result in an avoidable hinder against the server.

(i) Apparel or Equipment Loss. If a player loses any apparel, equipment, or other article, play shall be immediately stopped and that player shall be called for an avoidable hinder, unless the player has just hit a shot that could not be retrieved. If the loss of equipment is caused by a player's opponent, then a dead-ball hinder should be called. If the opponent's action is judged to have been avoidable, then the opponent should be called for an avoidable hinder.

#### **Rule 4.17 TIMEOUTS**

(a) Rest Periods. Each player or team is entitled to three 30-second timeouts in games to 15 and two 30-second timeouts in games to 11. Timeouts may not be called by either side after service motion has begun. Calling for a timeout when none remain or after service motion has begun, or taking more than 30 seconds in a timeout, will result in the assessment of a technical foul for delay of game.

(b) Injury. If a player is injured during the course of a match as a result of contact, such as with the ball, racquet, wall or floor, he will be awarded an injury timeout. While a player may call more than one timeout for the same injury or for additional injuries which occur during the match, a player is not allowed more than a total of 15 minutes of rest during a match. If the injured player is not able to resume play after total rest of 15 minutes, the match shall be awarded to the opponent. Muscle cramps and pulls, fatigue, and other ailments that are not caused by direct contact on the court will not be considered an injury.

(c) Equipment Timeouts. Players are expected to keep all clothing and equipment in good, playable condition and are expected to use regular timeouts and time between games for adjustment and replacement of equipment. If a player or team is out of timeouts and the referee determines that an equipment change or adjustment is necessary for fair and safe continuation of the match, the referee may award an equipment timeout not to exceed 2 minutes. The referee may allow additional time under unusual circumstances.

(d) Between Games. The rest period between the first two games of a match is 2 minutes. If a tiebreaker is necessary, the rest period between the second and third game is 5 minutes.

(e) Postponed Games. Any games postponed by referees shall be resumed with the same score as when postponed.

#### **Rule 4.18 TECHNICAL FOULS AND WARNINGS**

(a) Technical Fouls. The referee is empowered to deduct one point from a player's or team's score when, in the referee's sole judgment, the player is being overtly and deliberately abusive. If the player or team against whom the technical foul was assessed does not resume play immediately, the referee is empowered to forfeit the match in favor of the opponent. Examples of actions which may result in technical fouls are:

1. Profanity.; 2. Excessive arguing.
3. Threat of any nature to opponent or referee.
4. Excessive or hard striking of the ball between rallies.
5. Slamming of the racquet against walls or floor, slamming the door, or any action which might result in injury to the court or other players.
6. Delay of game. Examples include (i) taking too much time to dry the court,

(ii) questioning of the referee excessively about the rules, (iii) exceeding the time allotted for timeouts or between games, or (iv) calling a timeout when none remain.

7. Intentional front line foot fault to negate a bad lob serve.

8. Anything considered to be unsportsmanlike behavior.

9. Failure to wear lensed eyewear designed for racquet sports is an automatic technical foul on the first infraction and a mandatory timeout will be charged against the offending player to acquire the proper eyewear. A second infraction by that player during the match will result in automatic forfeiture of the match.

(b) Technical Warnings. If a player's behavior is not so severe as to warrant a technical foul, a technical warning may be issued without point deduction.

(c) Effect of Technical Foul or Warning. If a referee issues a technical foul, one point shall be removed from the offender's score. If a referee issues a technical warning, it shall not result in a loss of rally or point and shall be accompanied by a brief explanation of the reason for the warning. The issuing of the technical foul or warning has no effect on who will be serving when play resumes. If a technical foul occurs between games or when the offender has no points, the result will be that the offender's score will revert to minus one (-1).

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## **5 — TOURNAMENTS**

### **Rule 5.1 DRAWS**

(a) If possible, all draws shall be made at least 2 days before the tournament commences. The seeding method of drawing shall be approved by the AARA.

(b) At AARA National events, the draw and seeding committee shall be chaired by the AARA's Executive Director, National Tournament Commissioner, and the host tournament director. No other persons shall participate in the draw or seeding unless at the invitation of the draw and seeding committee.

(c) In local and regional tournaments the draw shall be the responsibility of the tournament director.

### **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 two singles events or a singles and doubles event. If possible, the schedule should provide at least 1 hour between matches.

(b) Final Matches. Where one or more players has 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 assure more rest between the final matches. If both final matches must be played on the same day or night, the following procedure is recommended that: (1) The singles match be played first and (2) A rest period of not less than 1 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 tournament director to notify the players of the change.

### **Rule 5.4 THIRD PLACE**

Players are not required to play off for 3rd place. However, for point standings, if one semifinalist wants to play off for third and the other semifinalist does not, the one willing to play shall be awarded third place. If neither semifinalist wishes to play off for 3rd then the points shall be totaled, divided by 2, and awarded evenly to both players.

### **Rule 5.5 ROUND ROBIN SCORING**

The final positions of players or teams in round robin competition is determined by the following sequence: a. Winner of the most matches; b. In a two way tie, winner of the head-to-head match; c. In a tie of three or more, the player who lost the

fewest games is awarded the highest position.

(1) *If a two way tie remains, the winner of the head-to-head match is awarded the higher position.*

(2) *If a multiple tie remains, the total points scored against each player in all matches will be tabulated and the player who had the least points scored against him is awarded the highest position.*

Note: Forfeits will count as a match won in two games. In cases where points scored against is the tiebreaker, the points scored by the forfeiting team will be discounted from consideration of points scored against all teams.

### **Rule 5.6 TOURNAMENT MANAGEMENT**

In all AARA sanctioned tournaments, the tournament director and/or AARA official in attendance may decide on a change of court after the completion of any tournament game, if such a change will accommodate better spectator conditions.

### **Rule 5.7 TOURNAMENT CONDUCT**

In all AARA sanctioned tournaments, the referee is empowered to forfeit a match, if the conduct of a player or team is considered detrimental to the tournament and the game. See Rules 3.5(d) and (e).

### **Rule 5.8 PROFESSIONAL**

A professional is defined as any player who has accepted prize money regardless of the amount in any professional sanctioned (including WPR and IRT) tournament or in any other tournament so deemed by the AARA Board of Directors. (Note: Any player concerned about the adverse effect of losing amateur status should contact the AARA National Office at the earliest opportunity to ensure a clear understanding of this rule and that no action is taken that could jeopardize that status.)

(a) An amateur player may participate in a professional sanctioned tournament but will not be considered a professional (i) if no prize money is accepted or (ii) if the prize money received remains intact and placed in trust under AARA guidelines.

(b) The acceptance of merchandise or travel expenses shall not be considered prize money, and thus does not jeopardize a player's amateur status.

### **Rule 5.9 RETURN TO AMATEUR STATUS**

Any player who has been classified as a professional can recover amateur status by requesting, in writing, this desire to be reclassified as an amateur. This application shall be tendered to the Executive Director of the AARA or his designated representative, and shall become effective immediately as long as the player making application for reinstatement of amateur status has received no money in any tournament, as defined in Rule 5.8 for the past 12 months.

### **Rule 5.10 AARA ELIGIBILITY**

(a) Any current AARA members who has not been classified as a professional (See Rule 5.8) may compete in any AARA sanctioned tournament.

(b) Any current AARA member who has been classified as a professional may compete in any event at an AARA sanctioned tournament that offers prize money or merchandise.

### **Rule 5.11 DIVISIONS**

(a) Open Division. Any player with amateur status.

(b) Adult Age Divisions. Eligibility is determined by the player's age on the first day of the tournament. Divisions are:

19+ - Junior Veterans	55+ - Golden Masters
25+ - Junior Veterans	60+ - Senior Golden Masters
30+ - Veterans	65+ - Veteran Golden Masters
35+ - Seniors	70+ - Advanced Golden Masters
40+ - Veteran Seniors	75+ - Super Golden Masters
45+ - Masters	80+ - Grand Masters
50+ - Veteran Masters	

(c) Junior Age Divisions. Player eligibility is determined by the player's age on January 1st of the current calendar year.

Divisions are:

18 & Under  
16 & Under  
14 & Under  
12 & Under

10 & under  
8 & under  
8 & under Multi-Bounce

### **Rule 5.12 DIVISION COMPETITION BY GENDER**

Men and women may compete only in events and divisions for their respective gender during regional and national tournaments. If there is not sufficient number of players to warrant play in a specific division, the tournament director may place the entrants in a comparably competitive division. Note: For the purpose of encouraging the development of women's racquetball, the governing bodies of numerous states permit women to play in men's divisions when a comparable skill level is not available in the women's divisions.

### **Rule 5.13 AARA REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

(a) Adult Regional Tournaments

1. *Regional tournaments will be conducted at various metro sites designated annually by the AARA and players may compete at any site they choose.*

2. *A person may compete in any number of adult regional tournaments, but may not enter a championship (no skill designation) division after having won that division at a previous adult regional tournament that same year.*

3. *A person cannot participate in more than two championship events at a regional tournament.*

4. *Any awards or remuneration to an AARA National Championship will be posted on the entry blank.*

(b) Junior Regional Tournaments All provisions of Rule 5.13(a) also apply to juniors, except:

1. *Regional tournaments will be conducted within the following regions which are identified for the purposes of junior competition:*

Region 1 Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut

Region 2 New York, New Jersey

Region 3 Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, D.C.

Region 4 Florida, Georgia

Region 5 Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee

Region 6 Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma

Region 7 Texas, Louisiana

Region 8 Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois

Region 9 West Virginia, Ohio, Michigan

Region 10 Indiana, Kentucky

Region 11 North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska

Region 12 Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Colorado

Region 13 Montana, Wyoming

Region 14 California, Hawaii, Nevada

Region 15 Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Alaska

Region 16 North Carolina, South Carolina

2. *A person may compete in only one junior regional singles and one junior regional doubles tournament each year.*

3. *Rules 5.13(a)(3) may not apply if tournaments (singles/doubles or adults/juniors) are combined.*

### **Rule 5.14 U.S. NATIONAL SINGLES AND DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The U.S. National Singles and Doubles Tournaments are separate tournaments and are played on different dates. Consolation events will be offered for all divisions.

(a) Competition in an adult regional singles tournament is required to qualify for the National Singles Championship. Current National Champions are exempt from qualifying for the next year's championships.

(b) The National Tournament Commissioner may handle the rating of each region and determine how many players shall qualify from each regional tournament.

(c) If a region is over subscribed, a playoff to qualify players in a division may be conducted the day prior to the start of a National Championship.

**Rule 5.15 U.S. NATIONAL JUNIOR OLYMPIC CHAMPIONSHIPS**

It will be conducted on a different date than all other National Championships and generally subject to the provisions of Rule 5.14.

**Rule 5.16 U.S. NATIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

It will be conducted on a different date than all other National Championships. Consolation events will be offered for all divisions.

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**6 — EIGHT AND UNDER MULTI-BOUNCE MODIFICATIONS**

In general, the AARA's standard rules governing racquetball play will be followed except for the modifications which follow.

**Rule 6.1 BASIC RETURN RULE**

In general, the ball remains in play as long as it is bouncing. However, the player may swing only once at the ball and the ball is considered dead at the point it stops bouncing and begins to roll. Also, anytime the ball rebounds off the back wall, it must be struck before it crosses the short line on the way to the front wall, except as explained in Rule 6.2.

**Rule 6.2 BLAST RULE**

If the ball caroms from the front wall to the back wall on the fly, the player may hit the ball from any place on the court—including past the short line—so long as the ball is bouncing.

**Rule 6.3 FRONT WALL LINES**

Two parallel lines (tape may be used) should be placed across the front wall such that the bottom edge of one line is 3 feet above the floor and the bottom edge of the other line is 1 foot above the floor. During the rally, any ball that hits the front wall (i) below the 3-foot line and (ii) either on or above the 1-foot line must be returned before it bounces a third time. However, if the ball hits below the 1-foot line, it must be returned before it bounces twice. If the ball hits on or above the 3-foot line, the ball must be returned as described in the basic return rule.

**Rule 6.4 GAMES AND MATCHES**

All games are played to 11 points and the first side to win two games, wins the match.

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**7 — ONE-WALL & THREE-WALL MODIFICATIONS**

In general, the AARA's standard rules governing racquetball play will be followed except for the modifications which follow.

**Rule 7.1 ONE-WALL**

There are two playing surfaces the front wall and the floor. The wall is 20 feet wide and 16 feet high. The floor is 20 feet wide and 34 feet to the back edge of the long line. To permit movement by players, there should be a minimum of three feet (six feet is recommended) beyond the long line and six feet outside each side line.

(a) Short Line. The back edge of the short line is 16 feet from the wall.

(b) Service Markers. Lines at least six inches long which are parallel with, and midway between, the long and short lines. The extension of the service markers form the imaginary boundary of the service line.

(c) Service Zone. The entire floor area inside and including the short line, side lines and service line.

(d) Receiving Zone. The entire floor area in back of the short line, including the side lines and the long line.

**Rule 7.2 THREE-WALL WITH SHORT SIDE WALL**

The front wall is 20 feet wide and 20 feet high. The side walls are 20 feet long and 20 feet high, with the side walls tapering to 12 feet high. The floor length and court markings are the same as a four wall court.

**Rule 7.3 THREE-WALL WITH LONG SIDE WALL**

The court is 20 feet wide, 20 feet high and 40 feet long. The side walls may taper from 20 feet high at the front wall down to 12 feet high at the end of the court. All court markings are the same as a four wall court.

**Rule 7.4 SERVICE IN THREE-WALL COURTS**

A serve that goes beyond the side walls on the fly is an out. A serve that goes beyond the long line on a fly, but within the side walls, is a fault.

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**8 — WHEELCHAIR MODIFICATIONS**

**Rule 8.1 CHANGES TO STANDARD RULES**

In general, the AARA's standard rules governing racquetball play will be followed except for the modifications which follow.

(a) Where AARA rules refer to server, person, body, or other similar variations, for wheelchair play such reference shall include all parts of the wheelchair in addition to the person sitting on it.

(b) Where the rules refer to feet, standing or other similar descriptions, for wheelchair play it means only where the rear wheels actually touch the floor.

(c) Where the rules mention body contact, for wheelchair play it shall mean any part of the wheelchair in addition to the player.

(d) Where the rules refer to double bounce or after the first bounce, it shall mean three bounces. All variations of the same phrases shall be revised accordingly.

**Rule 8.2 DIVISIONS**

(a) Novice Division. The novice division is for the beginning player who is just learning to play.

(b) Intermediate Division. The Intermediate Division is for the player who has played tournaments before and has a skill level to be competitive in the division.

(c) Open Division. The Open Division is the highest level of play and is for the advanced player.

(d) Multi-Bounce Division. The Multi-Bounce Division is for the individuals (men or women) whose mobility is such that wheelchair racquetball would be impossible if not for the Multi-Bounce Division.

(e) Junior Division. The junior divisions are for players who are under the age of 19. The tournament director will determine if the divisions will be played as two bounce or multi-bounce. Age divisions are: 8-11, 12-15, and 16-18.

**Rule 8.3 RULES**

(a) Two Bounce Rule. Two bounces are used in wheelchair racquetball in all divisions except the Multi-Bounce Division. The ball may hit the floor twice before being returned.

(b) Out-of-Chair Rule. The player can neither intentionally jump out of his chair to hit a ball nor stand up in his chair to serve the ball. If the referee determines that the chair was left intentionally it will result in loss of the rally for the offender. If a player unintentionally leaves his chair, no penalty will be assessed. Repeat offenders will be warned by the referee.

(c) Equipment Standards. In order to protect playing surfaces, the tournament officials may not allow a person to participate with black tires or anything which will mark or damage the court.

(d) Start. The serve may be started from any place within the service zone. Although the front casters may extend beyond the lines of the service zone, at no time shall the rear wheels cross either the service or short line before the served ball crosses the short line. Penalties for violation are the same as those for the

standard game.

(e) Maintenance Delay. A maintenance delay is a delay in the progress of a match due to a malfunction of a wheelchair, prosthesis, or assistive device. Such delay must be requested by the player, granted by the referee during the match, and shall not exceed 5 minutes. Only two such delays may be granted for each player for each match. After using both maintenance delays, the player has the following options:

1. Continue play with the defective equipment.
2. Immediately substitute replacement equipment.
3. Postpone the game, with the approval of the referee and opponent.

#### **Rule 8.4 MULTI-BOUNCE RULES**

(a) The ball may bounce as many times as the receiver wants though the player may swing only once to return the ball to the front wall.

(b) The ball must be hit before it crosses the short line on its way back to the front wall.

(c) The receiver cannot cross the short line after the ball contacts the back wall.

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### **9 — VISUALLY IMPAIRED MODIFICATIONS**

In general, the AARA's standard rules governing racquetball play will be followed except for the modifications which follow.

#### **Rule 9.1 ELIGIBILITY**

A player's visual acuity must not be better than 20/200 with the best practical eye correction or else the player's field of vision must not be better than 20 degrees. The three classifications of blindness are B1 (totally blind to light perception), B2 (able to see hand movement up to 20/600 corrected), and B3 (from 20/600 to 20/200 corrected).

#### **Rule 9.2 RETURN OF SERVE AND RALLIES**

On the return of serve and on every return thereafter, the player may make multiple attempts to strike the ball until (i) the ball has been touched, (ii) the ball has stopped bouncing, or (iii) the ball has passed the short line after touching the back wall. The only exception is described in Rule 8.3.

#### **Rule 9.3 BLAST RULE**

If the ball (other than on the serve) caroms from the front wall to the back wall on the fly, the player may retrieve the ball from any place on the court—including in front of the short line—so long as the ball has not been touched and is still bouncing.

#### **Rule 9.4 HINDERS**

A dead-ball hinder will result in the rally being replayed without penalty unless the hinder was intentional. If a hinder is clearly intentional, an avoidable hinder should be called and the rally awarded to the nonoffending player or team.

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### **10 — NATIONAL RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF [NRAD] MODIFICATIONS**

In general, the AARA's standard rules governing racquetball play will be followed except for the modifications which follow.

#### **Rule 10.1 ELIGIBILITY**

An athlete shall have a hearing loss of 55 db or more in the better ear to be eligible for any NRAD tournament.

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### **11 — WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION [WPRA] MODIFICATIONS**

In general, the AARA's standard rules governing racquetball play will be followed for competition on the Women's Professional Racquetball Association tour, except for the modifications which follow:

#### **Rule 11.1 MATCH, GAME, SUPER TIEBREAKER**

A match is won by the first side winning three games. All games, other than the fifth one, are won by the first side to score 11 points. The fifth game, called the super tiebreaker, is won by the first side scoring 11 points and having at least a 2-point lead. If necessary, the game will continue beyond 11 points until such time as one side has a 2-point lead.

#### **Rule 11.2 APPEALS**

There is no limit on the number of appeals that a player or team may make.

#### **Rule 11.3 SERVE**

The server may leave the service zone as soon as the serve has been made.

#### **Rule 11.4 DRIVE SERVICE ZONE**

The server may begin a drive serve anywhere in the service zone so long as the server is completely inside the 17-foot drive service zone when the ball is actually contacted.

#### **Rule 11.5 RETURN OF SERVE**

The receiver may enter the safety zone as soon as the ball has been served. The served ball may not be contacted in the receiving zone until it has bounced. Neither the receiver nor the receiver's racquet may break the plane of the short line unless the ball is struck after rebounding off the back wall. On the fly return attempt, the receiver may not strike the ball until the ball breaks the plane of the receiving line. The receiver's follow through may carry the receiver or the racquet past the receiving line.

#### **Rule 11.6 AVOIDABLE HINDER**

An avoidable hinder shall be called when one of the following occurs:

(a) The player's movement or failure to move interferes with their opponent's opportunity to take an offensive shot. The player is entitled to a free, unimpeded swing on their shot. The player should not be blocked by the opponent, preventing their getting to or returning the ball for an offensive shot.

(b) Any other action or conduct described in Rules 4.16(d) through 4.16(i).

#### **Rule 11.7 TIMEOUTS**

Each player or team is entitled to two 30-second timeouts per game.

#### **Rule 11.8 TIME BETWEEN GAMES**

The rest period between all games will be 2 minutes except that a 5-minute rest period will be allowed between the fourth and fifth games.

#### **Rule 11.9 EQUIPMENT TIMEOUTS**

A player does not have to use regular timeouts to correct or adjust equipment provided that the need for the change or adjustment is acknowledged by the referee as being necessary for fair and safe continuation of the match.

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### **12 — TRANSCOASTAL INTERNATIONAL RACQUETBALL TOUR [Men's Professional] MODIFICATIONS**

In general, the AARA's standard rules governing racquetball play will be followed for competition in the Transcoastal International Racquetball Tour, except for the modifications which follow:

#### **Rule 12.1 GAME, MATCH**

All games are played to 11 points, and are won by the player who scores to that level, with a 2-point lead. If necessary, the game will continue beyond 11 points, until such time as one player has a 2-point lead. Matches are played the best three out of a possible five games to 11.

#### **Rule 12.2 APPEALS**

The referee's call is final. There are no line judges, and no appeals may be made.

**Rule 12.3 SERVE**

Players are allowed only one serve to put the ball into play.

**Rule 12.4 SCREEN SERVE**

Screen serves are replayed.

**Rule 12.5 COURT HINDERS**

No court hinders are allowed or called.

**Rule 12.6 OUT OF COURT BALL**

Any ball leaving the court results in a loss of rally.

**Rule 12.7 BALL**

All matches are played with the Penn Pro ball.

**Rule 12.8 TIMEOUTS**

Each player is entitled to one 1-minute timeout per game.

**Rule 12.9 TIME BETWEEN GAMES**

The rest period between all games is 2 minutes.

**AMERICAN AMATEUR RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION**

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**RULE CHANGE PROCEDURES**

To ensure the orderly growth of racquetball, the AARA has established specific procedures that are followed before a major change is made to the rules of the game. Those procedures are:

- 1. Rule change proposals must be submitted in writing to the AARA National Office by June 1st.
2. The AARA Board of Directors will review all proposals at its October board meeting and determine which will be considered.
3. Selected proposals will appear in RACQUETBALL Magazine—the official AARA publication—as soon as possible after the October meeting for comment by the general membership.
4. After reviewing membership input and the recommendation of the National Rules Committee and National Rules Commissioner, the proposals are discussed and voted upon at the annual Board of Directors meeting in May.
5. Changes approved in May become effective on September 1st. Exception: changes in racquet specifications become effective 2 years later on September 1st.
6. Proposed rules that are considered for adoption in one year, but are not approved by the Board of Directors in May of that year, will not be considered for adoption the following year.

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