



**Official
USRA • NRC
FOUR-WALL**

**Racquetball
Rules**

Published by
**UNITED STATES RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION
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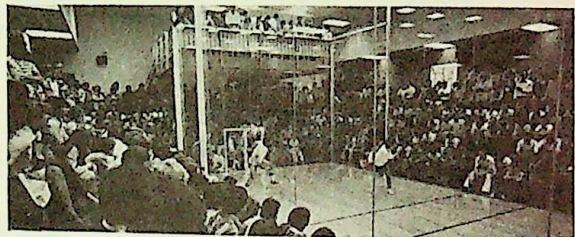
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FOUR-WALL Rules

PART I • The Game

Rule 1.1-Types of Games. Four-wall racquetball may be played by two, three or four players. When played by two it is called "*singles*," when played by three, "*cut throat*," and when played by four "*doubles*".

Rule 1.2-Description. Racquetball is a competitive game in which a racquet is used to serve and return a 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 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 rally. When the serving side loses a rally, it loses the serve. Losing the serve is called a "side out." Losing the first serve in doubles is a "hand out."

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.

Rule 1.7-Tie-breaker. In the event each side wins a game, the third game will be won by the side first scoring 11 points. This 11 point third game is called "tie-breaker."

PART II • Court and Equipment

Rule 2.1-Court. The specifications for a standard four-wall racquetball court are:

- (a) Dimensions. The dimensions shall be 20 feet wide, 20 feet high and 40 feet long with each back wall at least 12 feet high.
- (b) Lines and Zones. Racquetball courts shall be divided and marked on the floor with 1 ½ inch wide red, white or appropriately colored lines.
 - (1) Short Line. The short line divides the court in half, parallel to the front and back walls. The back edge of the short line shall be equal distance between the front and back walls, 20 feet from both.
 - (2) Service Line. The service line is parallel with the short line with the front edge of the service line five feet in front of the back edge of the short line.
 - (3) Service Zone. The service zone is the space between the outer edges of the short line.
 - (4) The Service Box Lines are located at each end of the service zone and designated by lines 18 inches from and parallel with each side wall.
 - (5) Service Boxes. The service boxes are the spaces between the side walls and the service box lines.
 - (6) Receiving Lines. Five feet back of the short line, vertical lines shall be marked on each side wall extending 3" to 6" from the floor. The back edges of the receiving lines shall be five feet from the back edge of the short line.

Rule 2.2-Ball Specifications. The specification for the standard racquetball are:

- (a) Size: The ball shall be 2¼ inches in diameter.

- (b) **Weight:** The ball shall weigh approximately 1.4 ounces.
- (c) **Bounce:** The ball shall bounce 68-72 inches from a 100 inch drop at a temperature of 76 degrees F.
- (d) **Official Ball.** The official ball of the USRA is the blue Seamco 600, the official ball of the NRC is the green Seamco 559; or any other racquetball deemed official by the USRA or NRC from time to time.

Rule 2.3-Ball Selection. A ball shall be selected by the game referee for use in each match in all tournaments. During a game the referee either at his discretion, or at the request of player or team, selects another ball. Balls that are not round or which bounce erratically shall not be used.

In tournament play, the referee and the players shall 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. 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 which must be securely wrapped on the players 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 may be gut, monofilament, nylon or metal.

Rule 2.5-Uniform.

(a) General. All parts of the uniform, consisting of a shirt, shorts, socks, and shoes should be clean. Only customary racquetball attire, in the referee's judgment, can be worn. Players may not play without shirts. Shirts must be full length (not a shirt cut off in the torso).

(b) Color. Color is optional provided, in the judgment of the referee, it does not affect the opposing player's view of the ball. (Some very dark colors or unusual patterns may do this).

(c) Wet Shirts. Referee may request wet shirt to be changed. Players should have ample supply of dry shirts.

(d) Lettering and Insignia. Names of the players may appear on the back of the uniform shirts. Lettering or insignia in poor taste are not allowed.

PART III • Officiating

Rule 3.1-Tournaments. All tournaments shall be managed by a committee or chairman who shall designate the officials. Officials shall be approved by national or local USRA representatives.

Rule 3.2-Officials. (a) A referee for all matches. (b) Two linesmen shall be appointed for all matches whenever possible with appointed linesmen presiding over all quarter-final, semi-final, championship and third place matches. (c) Additional officials, assistants, scorekeepers or record keepers may be designated as desired.

Rule 3.3- Qualifications. All officials shall be experienced and trained, and shall be thoroughly familiar with these rules and with the local playing conditions. All officials must meet USRA/NRC and NRRRA (National Racquetball Referees Association) or affiliates of said governing bodies, qualification requirements.

Rule 3.4- Briefing. Before each match the officials and players shall be briefed on rules and on court hindlers 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) Be present no later than 20 minutes prior to match time for player briefing and ball selection.
- (2) Check on adequacy of preparation of the court with respect to cleanliness, lighting and temperature for playability.
- (3) Check on availability and suitability of all materials necessary for the match such as balls, towels, score cards and pencils.
- (4) Check readiness and qualifications of assisting officials and linesmen and instruct them of their duties.
- (5) Point out any court hindlers to the players and check to see that all equipment is in compliance with the rules.
- (6) Remind players to have an adequate supply of extra racquets and uniforms.
- (7) Introduce players, toss coin and signal start of first game.

(8) Inform the players that all rules will be carefully enforced, and request any help and cooperation in calling double bounces and other infractions on themselves.

(b) Decisions. During games the referee shall decide all questions that may arise in accordance with these rules. In National events (i.e., pro tour, regionals, National Championships, National Juniors or any other event deemed "National" by the USRA or NRC) a protest shall be decided by the USRA or NRC National Director, or in that person's absence the National Commissioner, or in that person's absence the National Co-ordinator or any other person delegated by the National Director. On all questions involving judgment the decision of the referee is final. The referee shall have jurisdiction over the spectators as well as players while match is in progress.

(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. Any player for a singles match, or any team for a doubles match, must report to play 10 minutes before the scheduled game time to avoid a forfeiture, if circumstances warrant such a decision. A match may be forfeited by the referee for:

(1) Unsportsmanlike conduct. Any player refuses to abide by the referee's decision or engages in unsportsmanlike conduct.

(2) Leaving the court. Any player leaves the court at a time not allowed by these rules without permission of the referee.

(3) Failure to report. No show. Any player for a singles match, or any team for a doubles match, fails to report to play.

(4) Late start penalty. The opponent shall be awarded one point for each minute of delay of game up to 10 minutes. The match shall then be forfeited. This applies to the start of the match, between game time outs, time outs during a game and glove change time outs. Players should stay within ear-shot of the referee's call to help prevent the delay of game penalty. It is the obligation of the players to be ready to resume play on time even if the referee failed to give time warnings. If the matches are on, or ahead of, schedule, the players should be in the court warming up at least 10 minutes before the assigned match time to assure a prompt start. If running behind, the players should be dressed and ready to enter the court for a maximum 10 minute, in-court warm-up. If a player shows up five minutes late, "he" has restricted "himself" to a five minute warm-up, etc. The tournament chairman may permit a longer delay if circumstances warrant such a decision.

(5) Failure to comply with tournament rules or policies. A player or team may be forfeited by the tournament chairman or his designee for failure to referee, failure to properly conduct himself on the premises of the tournament between matches, or flagrant abuse of hospitality, locker room or other tournament rules or procedures.

(e) Technical Warning. If players behavior is not so severe as to warrant a "referee's technical," a technical warning may be issued without point deduction.

(f) Referee's Technical. The Referee is empowered to deduct one point from a contestant's or his team's total score when, in the referee's sole judgment, the contestant during the course of the match is being overtly and deliberately abusive. The actual invoking of this penalty is called a "Referee's Technical." If after the technical is called against the abusing contestant and the play is not immediately continued within the allotted time provided for under the existing rules, the referee is empowered to forfeit the match in favor of the abusing contestant's opponent or opponents as the case may be.

(1) Profanity. Profanity is an automatic technical and should be invoked by the referee whenever it occurs.

(2) Excessive arguing.

(3) Threats of any nature to opponents or referee.

(4) Excessive or hard striking of the ball between rallies.

(5) Excessive slamming of the racquet against walls or floor, slamming the door or any action that might cause injury to the court or other players on the court.

(6) Excessive delay.

Rule 3.6-Linesmen. Two linesmen will be designated by the tournament chairman or referee and shall, at the referee's signal, either agree or disagree with the referee's ruling.

The official signal by a linesman to show agreement with the referee is "thumbs up." The official signal to show disagreement is "thumbs down." The official signal for no opinion is an "open palm

down." If both linesmen signal no opinion the referee's call shall stand.

If both linesmen disagree with the referee, the referee must reverse his ruling. If one linesman agrees and one linesman disagrees or has no opinion the referee's call shall stand. If one linesman disagrees and one linesman has no opinion, the rally shall be re-played.

Linesmen should be careful not to signal until the referee acknowledges the appeal and asks for the signal. In giving the signal linesmen should take care *not* to look at each other. Any time the linesman is unsure of which call is being appealed, or what the referee's call was, he should request the referee to restate the appeal and the call.

Rule 3.7 - Appeals. In any match using linesmen, a player or team may appeal certain calls by the referee. These calls are (1) kill shots (skip balls); (2) fault serves-except foot faults when called by linesman if linesmen are being utilized. Fault serves shall include all fault serves described under Rule 4.5. (3) out serves (4) double bounce pickup.

The appeal must be directed to the referee, who will then request opinions from the linesmen. Any appeal made directly to a linesman by a player or team will be considered null and void and forfeit any appeal rights for that player or for that particular rally.

(a) Kill Shot Appeals. If the referee makes a call of "good" on a kill shot attempt which ends a particular rally, the loser of the rally may appeal the call, if he feels the shot was not good. If the appeal is successful and the referee's original call reversed, the

player who originally lost the rally is declared winner of the rally and is entitled to every benefit under the rules, i.e., point and/or service.

If the referee makes a call of "bad" or "skip" on a kill shot attempt, he has ended the rally. The player against whom the call went has the right to appeal the call, if he feels the shot was good.

If the appeal is successful and the referee's original call reversed, the referee must then decide if the shot could have been returned had play been allowed to continue. If the shot could have, or was returned, the rally shall be replayed. If the shot was a kill or pass that the opponent could not have retrieved, the player who originally lost the rally is declared winner of the rally. The referee's judgment in this matter shall be final.

(b) Fault Serve Appeals. If the referee makes a call of "fault" on a serve that the server felt was good, the server may appeal the call. If his appeal is successful, the server is then entitled to two additional serves. If the served ball was considered by the referee to be an ace and in his opinion there was absolutely no way for the receiver to return the serve, then a point shall be awarded to the server.

If the referee makes a "no call" on a particular serve (therefore making it a legal serve) but either player feels the serve was a fault, either player may appeal the call at the end of the rally. If the loser of the rally appeals and wins his appeal, then the situation reverts back to the point of service with the call becoming fault. If it was a first service, one more serve attempt is allowed. If the server already had one fault, the second fault would cause a side out.

(c) Out Serve Appeals. If the referee makes a call of "out serve" thereby stopping the play, the player against whom the call was made has the right of appeal. If his appeal is successful the referee shall revise the call to the proper call. If the referee makes a "no call" or calls "fault" but the receiver feels it was an "out serve" he has the right of appeal. If his appeal is successful the serve results in a "hand out."

(d) Double Bounce Pick-up Appeals. If the referee makes a call of "two bounces," thereby stopping play, the player against whom the call was made has the right of appeal, if he feels he retrieved the ball legally. If the appeal is upheld, the rally is re-played.

If the referee makes no call on a particular play during the course of a rally in which one player feels his opponent retrieved a ball on two or more bounces, the player feeling this way has the right of appeal. However, since the ball is in play, the player wishing to appeal must clearly motion the referee and linesmen by raising his non-racquet hand, thereby alerting them to the exact play which is being appealed. At the same time, the player appealing must continue to retrieve and play the rally.

If the appealing player should win the rally, no appeal is necessary. If he loses the rally, and his appeal is upheld, the call is reversed and the "good" retrieve by his opponent becomes a "double bounce pick-up," making the appealing player the winner of the rally.

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. The loser of the toss will serve first in the second game. The player or team scoring more points in games one and two combined shall serve first in the tie-breaker. In the event that both players or teams score an equal number of points in the first two games, another coin toss shall be held prior to the tie-breaker with the winner of toss serving first.

(b) Start. The serve is started from any place within 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 the short line. Violations are called "foot faults."

(c) Manner. The serve is commenced by bouncing the ball to the floor while standing within the confines of the service zone and 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. It is permissible for the server to stand on either the service or short line but not beyond it.

(d) Readiness. Serves shall not be made until the receiving side is ready, or the referee has called the score. The referee shall take care not to call the score too soon after previous rally. The score shall be called as both server and receiver prepare to return to their respective positions.

(e) Deliberate Delays. Deliberate delays on the part of the server or receiver exceeding 10 seconds shall result in an out or point against the offender.

(1) This "10 second rule" is applicable to both server and receiver, each of whom is allowed up to 10 seconds after the score has been 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. Such raising of the racquet is the only legal signal that the receiver may make to alert the referee and server that he is not ready.

(2) If the server serves a ball while the receiver is signaling "not ready" the serve shall go over with no penalty.

(3) If the server looks at the receiver and the receiver is not signalling "not readiness" the server may then serve. If the receiver attempts to signal "not ready" after this point such signal shall not be acknowledged and the serve becomes legal.

(f) Time Outs. At no time shall a call of "time out" by a player be acknowledged by the referee if the "time out" call does not precede the serve, i.e., the so-called "Chabot time-out" is not legal. The beginning of the serve, as indicated in rule 4.1 (c), is with the beginning of the service motion.

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 time 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.

(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" subject to penalties thereof.

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 result in a hand-out or side-out.

(c) **Out Serves.** An out serve results in a hand-out or side-out.

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) **Is a Screen Ball.** 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) Is a Court Hinder. If in the referee's opinion an erratic bounce, caused by a court obstruction, affected play, it should be called a "court hinder." The player should not stop play at any time in anticipation of a call, nor influence the call.

Included in court hinders is the unplayable, wet, skidding ball that hits a wet spot on the floor. This is the referee's, not the player's call.

(d) Involves a Broken or Defective Ball. A ball broken on the serve is a dead ball serve.

Rule 4.5-Fault Serves. The following serves are faults and any two in succession result in a hand out or side out.

(a) Foot Faults. A foot fault results when

(1) The server does not begin his service motion with both feet in the service zone, and he remains within the service zone until the ball passes the short line. Standing on, but not over the lines, is permitted. Violations are called foot faults.

(2) In doubles, the server's partner is not in the service box with both feet on the floor and back to the wall from the time the server begins his motion until the ball passes the short line.

(b) Short Service. A short service 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.

(c) Three-Wall Serve. A three-wall serve is any ball served that first 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 is an out of court serve.

Rule 4.6-Out Serves. Any one of the following serves results in a hand out or side out. The server must be within the boundaries described as the service zone when serve is commenced.

(a) 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.

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

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

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

(e) Crotch Serve. If the served ball hits the crotch of the front wall and floor, or front wall and side wall, it is an out serve. Any crotch serve into the back wall (or side wall on three-wall serves) is good and in play.

Rule 4.7-Return of Serve.

(a) Receiver(s). The receiver or receivers may not infringe on the "Receiving Lines" until the ball has

either bounced beyond the Short Line *or* passed the "Receiving Lines." Therefore, the receiver(s) may *not* execute a "Fly Return" within the five foot "Safety zone." Violation by the receiver(s) 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 it is illegal to strike the return of serve on the fly in front of the receiver's five foot restraining line. After the server has struck the ball the receiver may cross the five foot line to return the serve if the ball bounces between the short line and receiving line. If the ball does not bounce the receiver cannot hit it. Any serve that passes the five foot line in the air may be returned on the fly. Violation by the 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. (2) If the ball should strike the front wall, then back wall and then front wall again without striking the floor, the player whose turn it is to strike the ball, may do so by

letting the ball bounce after hitting the front wall a second time. (3) If the ball strikes the front wall, then back wall, and then front wall again after striking the floor, the player whose turn it is to strike the ball must do so by striking it before it hits the floor a second time.

(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 or side out. A server is entitled to continue serving until:

(1) Out Serve. He makes an out serve under Rule 4.6 or

(2) Fault Serve. He makes two fault serves in succession under Rule 4.5 or

(3) Hits Partner. He hits his partner with an attempted return, or

(4) Return Failure. He or his partner fails to keep the ball in play by returning it as required by Rule 4.7 (d), or

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

(6) Violation of the 10 second rule as stated in Rule 4.1 (e)

(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 receiver or receiving side, the

server; and so alternately in all subsequent services of the game.

Rule 4.9-Rallies. Each legal return after the serve is called a rally. Play during rallies shall be 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 ball must be hit with the racquet in one or both hands. Switching hands to hit a ball is an out. The use of any portion of the body to hit the ball and “carrying” the ball on the face of the racquet are illegal hits and result in the loss of the rally.

(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 hand out 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 player or 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. Deliberate wetting shall result in an out.

(g) Broken Ball. If there is any suspicion that the ball has broken during the serve, or 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 or otherwise defective, a new ball shall be put into play and the rally replayed.

(h) Ball Inspection. The ball may be inspected by the referee between rallies at any time during a match.

(i) 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) Players wearing protective

eye glasses have the responsibility of having such eye glasses securely fastened. In the event that such protective eye glasses should become unfastened and enter the court, the play shall be stopped as long as such eye glasses were fastened initially. In the event such eye glasses are not securely fastened, no stoppage of play shall result and the player wearing such glasses plays at his own risk. (3) 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 result in the rally 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. A ball that 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. The player that has been hit, or “nicked” by the ball may call this hinder, but must call it immediately.
- (3) Body Contact. Body Contact is not automatically a hinder and it will be the referee’s decision to allow play to continue if, in his judgment, the contact will not severely interrupt the flow of play.
- (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) Back Swing Hinder. If there is body contact on the back swing the player must call it immediately.

(7) 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 or when a player is hit or nicked by the ball and such a call must be made immediately as provided in Rule 4.10 (a), (2) & (6).

(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. In the judgment of the referee, on the other hand, the receiver must make a reasonable effort to move towards the ball.

(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 naturally it 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.

(1) View obstruction. Deliberately moving across a

player's line of vision just before he strikes the ball.

(2) **Distraction.** Any avoidable intimidation or distraction that would interfere with the player playing the ball such as stomping feet, shouting, whistling or loud noise.

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

(4) **Blocking.** Moves into a position affecting 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.

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

(6) **Pushing.** Deliberately pushing or shoving an opponent during a rally.

Rule 4.12- Rest Periods.

(a) **Time outs.** During a game each player in singles, or each side in doubles, either while serving or receiving may request a "time out." Each "time out" shall not exceed 30 seconds. No more than three "time outs" in a game shall be granted each singles player or each team in doubles. Two "time outs" shall be allotted each player in singles or each team in doubles in the tie-breaker.

1) **Equipment Time out.** At the discretion of the referee equipment time outs may be granted for lost shoes, broken shoelaces, torn equipment, wet shirts, wet floor, etc. Player is not charged for this time out.

(b) **Injury.** If a player is injured during the course of a match as a result of contact with the ball, racquet, opponent, wall or floor, he shall be granted an *injury*

time out. An injured player shall not be allowed more than a total of 15 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 the same player the Tournament Director or his designee shall determine whether the injured player shall be allowed to continue. Muscle cramps and pulls, fatigue and other ailments that are not caused by direct injury on the court will not be considered as an injury.

(c) **Between Games.** A five minute rest period is allowed between the first and second games and a five minute rest period between the second and third games. Players may leave the court between games, but must be on the court and ready to play at the expiration of the rest period.

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

PART V • Tournaments

Rule 5.1-Draws. The seeding method of drawing shall be the standard method approved by the USRA and NRC. All draws in professional brackets shall be the responsibility of the National Director of the NRC.

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 should be followed:

(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.

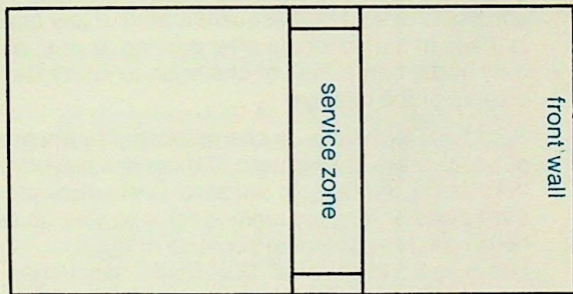
Rule 5.3-Notice of Matches. After the first round of matches it is the responsibility of each player to check the posted schedules to determine the time and place of each subsequent match. If any change is made in the schedule after posting, it shall be the duty of the committee or chairman to notify the players of the change.

Rule 5.4-Third Place. In championship tournaments, national, state, district, etc. if there is a playoff for third place, the loser in the semi-finals must play for third place or lose his ranking for next year unless he is unable to compete because of injury or illness. See Rule 3.5 (d) (4). In all USRA/NRC sanctioned events, the Tournament Director, or USRA/NRC affiliate can elect to award a "semi-finalists" award in lieu of a third place play off.

Rule 5.5-USRA Regional Tournaments. Each year the United States and Canada are divided into

regions for the purpose of sectional competition preceding the National Championships. The exact boundaries of each region are dependent on the location of the regional tournaments. The locations are announced in *NATIONAL RACQUETBALL* magazine.

- (a) Only players residing in the area defined can participate in a local tournament.
- (b) Winners of open singles and ladies open singles in regional tournaments will receive round trip air coach tickets to the USRA national tourney. Remuneration will be made after arrival at the Nationals.
- (c) A USRA officer will be in attendance at each regional tournament and will coordinate with the host chairman.



Standard four-wall court — 20 feet wide, 40 feet long, 20 feet high.

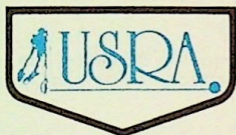
Tournament Management: In all USRA sanctioned tournaments the tournament chairman and/or the national USRA official in attendance may decide on a change of courts after the completion of any tournament game if such a change will accommodate better spectator conditions.

Tournament Conduct: In all USRA 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.

Professional Definition: Any player who has accepted \$1,000 or more in prize money (amount relates only to NRC tour) cannot participate in USRA amateur tournaments.

Age Brackets: The following age brackets, determined by the age of the player on the first day of the tournament are • Men Amateur Singles Open: Any age; Men Veteran Open (30+); Men Senior Singles: (35+); Men Veteran Senior Singles (40+); Men Masters Singles (45+); Men Veteran Masters Singles (50+); Men Golden Masters Singles (55+); Men Veteran Golden Masters Singles (60+) • Women Amateur Singles Open: Any age; Women Veteran Open (30+); Women Senior Singles (35+); Women Veteran Singles (40+); Women Masters Singles (45+); Women Veteran Masters Singles (50+) • Juniors: Separate events for boys and girls: 10 & Under, 12 & Under, 15 & Under, 17 & Under.

THE UNITED STATES RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION



Bob Kendler

Bob Kendler founded the United States Racquetball Association (USRA) in 1973 to govern amateur racquetball. The USRA publishes the official rules and its monthly magazine, *National Racquetball*, has affiliate organizations in every state and sponsors 500 amateur tournaments a year, from the annual June National Championships to local events.

The USRA rule book, free for all members, is updated each year to provide rules and regulations under which the game is played.

NATIONAL RACQUETBALL, also free to members, is the voice of the USRA, containing instruction, news and photos of pro and amateur competition and features on people who play the game.

Affiliates promote the sport with special emphasis on juniors and women players. Sanctioning by state affiliates makes an event eligible for free balls, souvenir shirts, draw sheets, scorecards, rule books and other materials in the USRA's tournament package.

THREE WALL Rules

Three-wall racquetball is played on courts with:

1. Front and two side walls (no back wall)
2. Front, back and one side wall (one side open) jai-alai type court.

While there are no standard dimensions (some courts are 24 feet wide, 48 feet long, 24 feet high— others 22 feet wide, 44 feet long, 22 feet high, etc.), the standard 20 foot width, 40 foot length and 20 foot high court is recommended.

1. Three-Wall Racquetball (No backwall)

Regardless of the dimensions the court should be divided into a front and back court of equal dimensions by a line called the **SHORT LINE** running parallel with the front wall.

From the outer edge of each side wall, and running parallel with the front wall, a line should be drawn, known as the **LONG LINE** (back court boundary line).

Other floor markings, Service Line, Service Box (where partner stands), etc., should be the same as those four-wall courts.

The playing rules for games on the three-wall courts are the same as those for the four-wall game with the exception that a ball, in play, striking outside the long line is a point, or side out (or hand out), as the case may be. A service ball, striking outside the long line, is a long ball. Two long balls in succession, or one long and one short ball puts the server out.

2. Three-Wall Racquetball (Jai-Alai type court)

The Jai-Alai court game brings into play all the skills required in making back wall, side wall, and corner shots, common to four-wall play, and with the open side play, requires the accuracy and well-controlled shots of one-wall racquetball.

The Jai-Alai court has the same dimensions and playing area as the standard four-wall court—20 feet wide, 40 feet long, 20 feet high. A one and a half inch line is drawn on the open side of the court from the front to the back wall called the **OUTSIDE LINE**. Balls striking outside of this line are points or side outs (or hand outs), as the case may be.

The floor markings: Short, Service, Server's Partner's Box, are the same as for a four-wall court, with the "short" line dividing the court in equal dimensions. The front wall of the first game is used as the back wall for the next game—the players simply change court serving ends after each game. This plan eliminates any unfair advantage a player, having a strong right hand or left hand, may have over a player with a weak playing left or right hand.

The present four-wall racquetball rules apply: service, shorts, or longs, foot faults, receiving, hinders, etc., and the one-wall rules apply to all balls striking outside the sideline.

For further information write to the Recreation and Cultural Affairs Administration, 830 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York, 10021.

ONE WALL Rules

At the first National One Wall Championships in 1980 the following rules applied.

One wall racquetball is played on a court with a front wall 20 feet wide and 16 feet high, including any top line. The floor is 20 feet wide and 34 feet from the wall to the back edge of the long line. There is a minimum of six feet beyond the long line and six feet outside each side line to permit the players to move. The short line is 16 feet from the back edge of the front wall to the outside edge of the one and one-half inch short line. Service markers are at least six inches long parallel to and midway between the long and short lines, extending in from the side lines.

All four wall rules apply with the following exceptions:

1. One serve only is allowed.
2. Any serve landing out of bounds (side or back line) is an automatic side out.
3. The server either (1) stands to the left or right of center and serves to the wider (more open) portion of the court or (2) stands in the center and designates to which side he or she is serving.
4. Any serve that passes within 18 inches of the server's body is a fault and a side out.
5. In doubles the server who isn't serving must stand off the court to the side either at the serving line or behind the back line.
6. The referee who calls the score is located behind the back line. The linesman is located to the right of the short line.

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