University of Toledo Intramural Racquetball Rules
Revised 11/28/2007

**GENERAL**

- Intramural Guidelines as set forth in the Intramural Handbook govern all participation.
- All participants must be currently enrolled as a student, faculty, or staff member of the University of Toledo.
- All participants must present a current, valid UT Rocket Card upon checking in with the IM Staff. Participants who do not have their UT Rocket Card with them WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE. No other form of identification will be accepted. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- Individuals may only play for one same sex team and one coed team per sport. The first team for which a participant plays is the team to which she/he is committed for the duration of that season.
- A player may not participate unless she/he is recorded on the score sheet. Players may be added to a roster at any time during the regular season provided all other eligibility criteria are met (see Intramural Handbook). During tournament play a doubles team may have a third person listed on their roster.
- Game time is forfeit time. There is no grace period. All players must be signed in and ready to play at the exact scheduled game time.

**Forfeit/Default**

- **Forfeits:** Any team or individual that fails to appear for any scheduled contest will be charged with a forfeit. Similarly, a forfeit will result when a team does not have at least the minimum number of players needed to play the activity signed in and ready to play at the appointed playing field by the time of the game. Game time is forfeit time. There is no grace period. It is recommended that teams arrive 15-30 minutes prior to the start of each game in order to allow time to sign in and warm up. All forfeited contests will be recorded as a loss. This policy will be unilaterally enforced.

Furthermore, any team or individual that forfeits a game will owe a $15 forfeit fee for each game forfeited. This fee will be charged to the manager of the team and must be paid for at the University of Toledo Student Recreation Center. Any team or individual that has forfeited a game and has not paid the $15 forfeit fee will not be eligible to participate in playoff games until the forfeit fee has been paid. If forfeit fees remain unpaid at the end of each sport season, the manager will be declared ineligible and will be suspended from any further Intramural participation. Once the forfeit fee is paid, the manager will be reinstated and become eligible to participate in all Intramural activities.

- **Defaults:** If a team knows in advance that it will not be able to make a schedule contest, the manager should contact the Intramural Department. A default will be granted to each team or individual that has notified the Intramural Department according to the following deadlines:
  - **Games scheduled for Monday-Friday** notification must be received by 5pm on the day before the schedule game
  - **Games scheduled for Saturday/Sunday** notification must be received by 3pm on the Friday before the schedule game. Managers may contact the Intramural Department by notifying the Coordinator of Intramurals at 530-3704 or by email at mailto:joe.bendix@utoledo.edu. This notification must come from the team manager only. All defaulted contests will be counted as a loss. However, the team manager will not owe a forfeit fee and will maintain access to the University of Toledo Student Recreation Center.
• **Dropped from Play:**
  Any combination of two forfeits/defaults in the same season will result in a team being dropped from play for the remainder of that particular season. Any team owing a forfeit fee will be eliminated from playoff eligibility. Any team that forfeits/defaults a game in a single or double elimination tournament will also be dropped from play.

• Forfeited and defaulted contests will not be rescheduled.

**The Game:**

**POINTS**
Points are scored only by the serving side. Losing the serve is called a sideout in singles. In doubles, when the first server loses the serve it is called a "hand-out" or "half-out" and when the second server loses the serve it is then a sideout.

**MATCH**
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. *It is NOT required that a player "win by two" points.*

**SERVE**
The server will have two opportunities to put the ball into play. 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. If both player's 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.

**START**
The server may not start the service motion until he/she has called the score or "second serve." The serve is started from any place within the service zone. (Certain drive serves are an exception.) 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 beyond, the lines is permitted. However, when completing the service motion, the server may step beyond 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 beyond the short line until the ball passes the short line.

**MANNER**
After taking a set position inside the service zone, a player may begin the service motion—any continuous movement that results in the ball being served. Once the service motion begins, when the ball leaves the hand, it must next bounce on the floor in the zone and then, without touching anything else, be struck by the racquet before it bounces on the floor 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.

**READINESS**
The service motion shall not begin until the server has called the score or "second serve" and the server has visually checked the receiver's readiness.
DELAYS

(a) The 10-second rule applies to the server and receiver simultaneously. Concurrently, 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 a receiver is not ready, they must signal by raising the racquet above the head or completely turning the back to the server. (These are the only two acceptable signals.)

(b) Serving while the receiving player/team is signaling “not ready” is a fault serve.

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

DRIVE SERVICE ZONES

There is a drive serve line 3 feet from each side wall in the service zone. Viewed one at a time, each drive serve line divides the service zone into a 3-foot and a 17-foot section. The player may drive serve between the body and the side wall nearest to where the service motion began only if the player, the racquet, and ball (until it is struck) starts and remains outside of that 3-foot drive service zone until the served ball crosses the short line. If the service motion begins in one 3 foot drive serve zone and continues into the other 3 foot drive serve zone, the player may not hit a drive serve at all.

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

(b) The 3-foot line is part of the 3-foot zone and defines a plane that, if broken, is an infraction.

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).

DEAD BALL SERVES

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

(a) 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. In addition, any serve that hits any surface designated by local rules as an obstruction rather than being out-of-play.

(b) 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.

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. At the start of or during the service motion, any part of the server (or doubles partner), including the racquet, touches the floor outside of the service zone.

2. At the end of the serve, the server steps with either foot on the floor beyond the service line (with no part of the foot on the line or inside the service zone) before the served ball crosses the short line.
(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) **Bouncing Ball Outside Service Zone.** Bouncing the ball outside the service zone, including the ball touching a side wall, as a part of the service motion is a fault serve.

(g) **Illegal Drive Serve.** A drive serve in which the player fails to observe the 17 foot drive service zone.

(h) **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 take up good court position, near center court, to obtain that view.)

(i) **Serving before the Receiver is Ready.** A serve is made while the receiver is not ready.

**OUT SERVES**
Any of the following results in an out:

(a) **Two Consecutive Fault Serves,** or a single fault serve in one serve play [see exceptions: 5.0].

(b) **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, including the foot. Also, allowing the ball to bounce more than once during the service motion.

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

(d) **Fake or Balk Serve.** Any movement of the racquet toward the ball during the serve that is non-continuous and done for the purpose of deceiving the receiver. If a balk serve occurs, but the referee believes that no deceit was involved, the option of declaring "no serve" and having the serve replayed without penalty can be exercised.

(e) **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.

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

(g) **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.

(h) **Out of Court Serve.** An out of court serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and, before striking the floor, either goes out of the court or hits a surface above the normal playing area of the court that has been declared as out-of-play for a valid reason [See Rule 2.1(a)].
(i) **Safety Zone Violation.** An immediate loss of serve shall result if, after the serve has been struck, the server or doubles partner steps into the safety zone before the served ball passes the short line.

**RETURN OF SERVE**

(a) Receiving Position

1. The receiver may not break the plane of the receiving line with the racquet or body until the ball either bounces in the safety zone or else crosses the receiving line.

2. The follow through may carry the receiver or the racquet past the receiving line, but neither may break the plane of the short line unless the ball is struck after rebounding off the back wall.

3. 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) 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 receiving the serve 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.

**CHANGES OF SERVE**

(a) Outs. A server is entitled to continue serving until one of the following occurs:

1. Out Serve.

2. Two Consecutive Fault Serves.

3. Failure to Return Ball. Player or team fails to keep the ball in play.

4. Penalty Hinder. Player or team commits a penalty hinder which results in an out.

   (b) **Sideout.** Retiring the server in singles is called a sideout.

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

**RALLIES**

All of the play that 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 safety cord during a rally 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 that 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 is hit such that it goes into the gallery or wall opening or else hits a surface above the normal playing area of the court that has been declared as out-of-play.

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

5. A ball struck by a player hits that player or that player’s partner.

6. Committing a penalty hinder.

7. Switching hands during a rally.

8. Failure to use a racquet wrist safety cord.

9. Touching the ball with the body or uniform.

10. Carrying or slinging the ball with the racquet.

(d) Effect of Failure to Return. Violations of Rules (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. 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.

(f) 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 resumes play at first serve. 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 that struck the ball after the rally.)

(g) 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 replay hinder. 2. If a player loses any apparel, equipment, or other article, the player shall stop play immediately and declare a penalty hinder or replay hinder.

(h) Replays. Whenever a rally is replayed for any reason, the server resumes play at first serve. A previous fault serve is not considered.

REPLAY HINDERS
A rally is replayed without penalty and the server resumes play at first serve whenever a replay hinder occurs. Also, see the rule which describes conditions under which a penalty hinder might be declared and result in loss of the rally.

(a) Situations

1. Court Hinders. The referee should stop play immediately whenever the ball hits any part of the court that was designated prior to the match as a court hinder (such as a vent grate). The referee should also stop play (i) when the ball takes an irregular bounce as a result of contacting an irregular surface (such as court light or vent) or after striking a wet spot on the floor or wall.
2. **Ball Hits Opponent.** When an opponent is hit by a return shot in flight, it is a replay hinder. If the opponent is struck by a ball that 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. Note this interference may, under certain conditions, be declared a penalty hinder.

3. **Body Contact.** If body contact occurs and 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, a hinder shall be called. 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 for either player.

4. **Screen Ball.** Any ball rebounding from the front wall so close to the body of the defensive player that it prevents the offensive player from having a clear view of the ball. A ball that passes between the legs of a player who has just returned the ball is not automatically a screen. It depends on whether the other player is impaired as a result. Generally, 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. Note the interference may be considered a penalty hinder.

6. **Safety Holdup.** Any player about to execute a return, who believes that striking the opponent with the ball or racquet is likely, may immediately stop play and request a replay hinder. This call must be made immediately.

7. **Other Interference.** Any other unintentional interference that 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) **Responsibility.** 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 and swing at the ball. However, the receiver is responsible for making a reasonable effort to move towards the ball and must have a reasonable chance to return the ball for any type of hinder to be called.

**PENALTY HINDERS**
A penalty hinder results in the loss of the rally. A penalty hinder does not necessarily have to be an intentional act. Any of the following results in a penalty hinder:

(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. A player moves in such a direction that it prevents an opponent from taking either of these shots.

(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 in a direction that prevents the opponent from making a shot.

(c) **Blocking.** Moves into a position which blocks the opponent from getting to, or returning, the ball; or in doubles, the offensive player who is not returning the ball hinders or impedes either defensive players’ ability to move into a position to cover the pending shot.
(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, waving 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 ensure that the ball is dry prior to the serve. Any wet ball that is not corrected prior to the serve shall result in a penalty 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 a penalty 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 replay hinder should be called. If the opponent’s action is judged to have been avoidable, then the opponent should be called for a penalty hinder.

**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 once the service motion has begun. Calling for a timeout when none remain or after the service motion has begun will result in the assessment of a technical foul for delay of game. If a player takes more than 30 seconds for a single timeout, the referee may automatically charge any remaining timeouts, as needed, for any extra time taken. Once all time allowed has expired, a delay of game technical foul can be assessed. A player who leaves the court should call a timeout or else advise the referee of the reason for leaving the court. If a player leaves the court without advising the referee, a timeout may be charged to that player. If none remain, the referee may assess a technical foul for delay of game; however, the referee may excuse a delay if the player’s reason for leaving was to correct a problem affecting the playability of the court, such as obtaining a towel to dry the court or disposing of some foreign material from the court.

(b) **Injury.** If a player is injured during the course of a match because of contact, such as with the ball, racquet, wall, floor, or another player, an injury timeout will be awarded. While a player may call more than one timeout for the same injury or for additional injuries that occur during the match, a player is not allowed more than a total of 15 minutes of rest for injury during the entire 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. 1. Should any external bleeding occur, the referee must halt play as soon as the rally is over, charge an injury timeout to the person who is bleeding, and not allow the match to continue until the bleeding has stopped. 2. Muscle cramps and pulls, fatigue, and other ailments that are not caused by direct contact on the court will not be considered an injury. Injury time is also not allowed for pre-existing conditions.

(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 grant 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.
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. Some examples of actions that can 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 that might result in
damage to the court or injury to other players.

6. Delay of game. Examples include

   (i) taking too much time to dry the court,

   (ii) excessive questioning of the referee about the rules,

   (iii) exceeding the time allotted for timeouts or between games,

   (iv) calling a timeout when none remain, or after the service motion begins, or

   (v) taking more than ten seconds to serve or be ready to receive serve.

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

DOUBLES PLAY
Before the match, each team must have a set order of service. That order must be followed through the
match, except that the order may be changed between games.

At the beginning of a game, when a team’s first server is out, the team is out. Thereafter, each player on
the team serves until the team receives both a handout and a sideout.

On a serve, the server’s partner must stand with back to the side wall and both feet on the floor within
the service box until the served ball passes the short line. A violation is a foot fault. If the server’s
partner enters the safety zone before the serve passes the short line, the server loses service.

If the served ball hits the server’s partner while in the service box, it is a fault.

If either partner serves out of order, any points by that server will be subtracted from the score and an
out serve is called. If the first server serves out of order, a sideout is called. If the second server serves
out of order, the out serve will be called on the first server and the second server continues serving.

If a player’s attempted return hits the player’s partner, the team loses the rally.

In doubles if one player swings at but misses the ball, both he/she and his/her 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.