

# *THE TCHOUKBALL REFEREES' CODE*

## *OF THE INTERNATIONAL TCHOUKBALL FEDERATION (FITB)*

### *Foreword*

The present document precisely defines the rules of Tchoukball applicable in all official meetings, national and international. This new version of the rules follows from the FITB technical and refereeing committee meeting held in Neuchâtel (Switzerland) on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July 1987. The decisions taken and some of the propositions put forward on this occasion were integrated in this update of the refereeing code.

Since 1970, during which year Dr Hermann Brandt first officially introduced Tchoukball, the rules underwent several modifications. The present changes, as in the past, have been added in order to harmonise the practice of Tchoukball while taking into account the latest experiences, without however spoiling the spirit of the game's creator.

### *Introduction*

A Tchoukball match opposes two nine-player teams on a rectangular field forty meters long by twenty meters wide. One rebound frame is placed at each end of the field. In front of each frame, a semi-circle three meters in radius defines a forbidden zone.

The ball meets the standards of the Handball game. It must never touch the ground. During any phase of the game, the ball remains in the hands of one team; interception is forbidden in order to prevent aggressions and violent physical contacts between opponents. Control of the ball is handed to the other team after every shoot at the frame or after every fault.

In order to score a point for his team, a player must bounce the ball off the frame such that no defending player can catch it before it falls on the field of play.

The team that has just conceded a point restarts the game. A maximum of three passes is allowed to put one player in a favourable position to shoot. Defending players are not allowed to interfere this preparation, but they must anticipate in order not to be surprised by the ball's trajectory when it bounces from the frame. At the end of the allotted time, the team with the most points wins the match.

Outside of competition, it will often prove necessary to adapt the rules to the number of available players, to their level of preparedness, or to the size of the playing field. The flexibility of Tchoukball makes it a sport accessible to all by allowing a great freedom of action. However, any modification must follow a reflection on its educative, physiological, and psychosocial impact. This caution is absolutely indispensable in order not to lose any of the advantages provided by the scientific design of Tchoukball.

***Rule 1******The Playing Area***

- 1.1 The recommended playing area is a 40m x 20m rectangle; it consists of a field of play and two forbidden zones.
- 1.2 The long sides are known as the sidelines and the short lines as the base lines. The playing area is divided into two zones by a median line joining the midpoints of the sidelines.
- 1.3 The "forbidden" zone is a semi-circle, with a 3m radius measured from the centre of each base line.
- 1.4 The front base of the frame is positioned in the middle of the diameter of this zone.
- 1.5.1 The lines should be clearly visible and with a width of 5 cm.
- 1.5.2 All lines are part of the area they delimit: The sidelines and the base lines belong to the field of play. The lines of the forbidden zone (semi-circle and diameter) belong to this area.
- 1.6 In sports halls, the ceiling or sport engines higher than 7m are considered as out of the playing area.
- 1.7 A 2 meter wide unobstructed area around the playing area is recommended.

***Rule 2******The Frame***

- 2.1 The frame and the net size, the inclination between the frame and the ground must conform to the F.I.T.B. standards.
- 2.2 The net has to be sufficiently taut.
- 2.3 The frame must be fixed during the play in a way that cannot endanger the players.
- 2.4 The frame has to be officially approved by the F.I.T.B.

***Rule 3******The Ball***

- 3.1 The ball must be round, with a leather covering and a rubber bladder.
- 3.2 In men's matches, the ball must have a circumference of 58 to 60cm and weigh 425 to 475 grams.
- 3.3 In women's and junior matches the ball must have a circumference of 54 to 56 cm and weigh 325 to 400 grams.
- 3.4 In mixed matches the ball will meet the standards used for women's and junior matches.

***Rule 4******The Players***

- 4.1 A squad can be made up of up to 15 players; but in any given match, only 12 may be on the match sheet.
- 4.2 Of the 12 players, only 9 can play simultaneously at any given time, the remaining 3 act as substitutes.
- 4.3.1 Substitution will take place in front of the scorekeeper's table or in front of the team benches, within 5m on each side of the median line, without stopping the game.
- 4.3.2 A wounded player can be replaced as soon as he is out of the playing field.

- 4.3.3 Substitution can take place only if a point has been scored.
- 4.4 Players should be dressed uniformly and have a clearly visible number from 5 to 20.
- 4.5 Players are to wear sports shoes without studs. On grass or other soft surfaces, sports shoes with rubber-ridged soles are authorised.
- 4.6 It is forbidden to wear any jewellery, (whether ring, broach, watch, earrings...)

### **Rule 5**

### ***The Referees***

- 5.1 The refereeing body for international matches shall comprise 3 persons, of whom one is to be responsible for the scoring and time keeping.
- 5.2 The referees control the game according to the rules.
- 5.3 The scorekeeper notes the results, deliberate offences, foul play; he checks that substitutions and engagement are correctly made. He gets the match-sheet to be signed.
- 5.4 The referee's outfit is clearly different from the players' outfit. They have at their disposition a whistle, yellow cards (warning), and red cards (expulsion).

### **Rule 6**

### ***The Duration of the Matches***

- 6.1 The duration of the men's matches shall be three periods of 15 minutes, with a maximum interval of 5 minutes between periods.
- 6.2 The duration of the women's and junior matches shall be three periods of 12 minutes, with a maximum interval of 5 minutes between periods.
- 6.3 The duration of the junior matches (less than 16 year-old players) shall be three periods of 10 minutes, with a maximum interval of 5 minutes between periods.
- 6.4 The referee shall decide when the stopwatch is to be stopped and restarted (in case of injury...).
- 6.5 Upon the final blast of whistle, the game ends at once: consequently, any ongoing action shall be declared null.

### **Rule 7**

### ***The Faults***

- 7.1 A player commits a fault if:
  - 7.1.1 he touches the ball with his leg;
  - 7.1.2 he makes more than 3 contacts with the feet on the ground whilst holding the ball (receiving the ball with one or two feet on the ground counts as one contact);
  - 7.1.3 he holds the ball for more than 3 seconds;
  - 7.1.4 he makes a pass that takes the team count of successive passes over 3 (a deviation of the ball is considered as a pass);
  - 7.1.5 he touches any area outside of the field of play while holding the ball;
  - 7.1.6 he drops the ball during a pass;
  - 7.1.7 he obstructs the movement of an opponent about to receive the ball, shoot, pass, position himself...
  - 7.1.8 he shoots at the frame on which 3 consecutive shots have already been made (a breakdown or point scored returns the count to zero);
  - 7.1.9 he touches the ball rebounding from the net after a team mate shot and the ball falls down into the field of play;

- 7.1.10 he makes contact with the forbidden zone before he has thrown the ball;
- 7.1.11 he goes through the forbidden zone to take a defensive position;
- 7.1.12 he shoots, after an engagement, before the ball has crossed the median line;
- 7.1.13 he enters the ground, upon substitution, before his teammate has come out.
- 7.2 A fault is penalised by a breakdown in favour of the adverse team. The referee is to ensure that the free throw is taken from where the fault occurred. At least one pass must be made before shooting at the frame. The referee has to check that the ball is rolled (and not thrown) to the place of free throw.

## **Rule 8**

### ***The Awarding of Points***

- 8.1 A player scores a point if the ball rebounding from the frame:
  - 8.1.1 touches the field of play before a defender can catch it;
  - 8.1.2 touches a defender who fails to control it by dropping it on the floor or knocking it out of play;
  - 8.1.3 touches a defender on his legs (rule 7.1.1).
- 8.2 A player concedes a point if:
  - 8.2.1 he shoots and misses the frame;
  - 8.2.2 the ball rebounding from the net, after a shot, falls out of play or into the forbidden zone;
  - 8.2.3 he shoots and the ball rebounds onto him.
  - 8.2.4 he touches the ball having a contact with the forbidden zone or being outside of the playing area after a teammate shot.
  - 8.2.5 he deflects the rebounding ball into the forbidden zone or out of the play after a teammate shot;
  - 8.2.6 he deliberately touches the ball, preventing it from falling out of play or into the forbidden zone. He has committed an intentional foul.
  - 8.2.7 while trying to catch the ball, he steps into the forbidden zone or out of the playing area.
- 8.3 The team that has the highest score at the end of the conventional time is the winner.

## **Rule 9**

### ***Starting and Restarting the Play***

- 9.1 At the beginning of the match, the team who gets the ball is chosen by lots. At the start of the second period, it is the other team's turn. At the beginning of the third period, the ball is in the hands of the losing team (in case of an even score, of the team who started the match).
- 9.2 he team that has conceded a point restarts the game.
- 9.3.1 The restart shall take place behind the base line and beside the frame on which the last point was scored. If there is not enough space in the referee's opinion, the restart can take place from inside the forbidden zone.
- 9.3.2 If rule 9.3.1. is not respected or if the ball leaves the playing area, the adverse team is awarded a restart.
- 9.4.1 Following the restart, the first shot may be on either frame provided the ball has crossed the median line
- 9.4.2 The ball is considered to have crossed the median line if the catcher has his feet clearly on the far side of the median line
- 9.4.3 One or more pass is allowed before the ball crosses the median line.
- 9.5 The restart does not count as a pass.

**Rule 10*****Faulty Bounce***

- 10.1** A faulty bounce occurs when:
- 10.1.1** the ball touches the metal edge of the frame;
- 10.1.2** the rebounding ball does not respect the mirror image as a result of hitting the frame's rubber bands or clips.
- 10.2** If a defending team successfully catches a faulty bounce, the game goes on. If, on the other hand, it fails to control the ball, the game stops and the defending team is given a free throw from the spot where the ball did fall.
- 10.3** Rules 8.2.2 to 8.2.6 remain in effect even after a faulty bounce.

**Rule 11*****Behaviour towards Opponents, Referees and Public***

- 11.1** Each player, referee, coach or manager must respect the Tchoukball Charter.
- 11.2** A player who violates the spirit of the game through disrespectful behaviour towards an opponent, a referee, a spectator or a teammate will receive a warning from the referee (yellow card), who can also, if he deems it necessary, expel the player.
- 11.3** An expelled player may be replaced.
- 11.4** Warnings and expulsions are noted on the match sheet.

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