NATIONAL

NGL

GRIDBALL
LEAGUE

OFFICIAL
RULEBOOK

VERSION 2.1.4 · 2025 EDITION

Own the Grid. Own the Game.

National Gridball League™
Official Rulebook — Version 2.1.4

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Foreword

Dear Gridball Enthusiasts,

Welcome to the Official Rulebook of the National Gridball League™ (NGL™), Version 2.1.4. As the founder of this sport, I am proud to present this updated edition — a document that reflects not just the rules of a game, but the foundation of a movement.

Gridball was born from a simple idea: take the energy and joy of playground games like four square and boxball, and build something professional, competitive, and worthy of elite athletes. What began as a concept has grown into a fully structured sport with its own court, its own metrics, its own championship, and its own world.

This version of the rulebook incorporates feedback, clarifications, and refinements that make the game tighter, fairer, and more compelling at every level. Every change in this edition was made deliberately — to serve the integrity of competition, the safety of players, and the experience of fans.

Gridball belongs to everyone. The sport itself is in the public domain — free to be played, taught, and organized by anyone, anywhere. What the NGL provides is the professional standard: the framework within which the best players in the world compete for the NGL Championship Cup.

Own the Grid. Own the Game.

Jaylon G. Ballard
Founder, National Gridball League

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INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this rulebook is to provide a comprehensive, authoritative guide to the game of Gridball as played in the National Gridball League (NGL). It defines all rules, regulations, and standards required for official NGL play at every level — from league matches and playoffs to the NGL Championship Cup.

This rulebook applies to all NGL-sanctioned events and supersedes all previous versions. Players, coaches, referees, franchise operators, and league officials are bound by the standards set forth herein.

1.2 Overview of Gridball

Gridball is a dynamic, team-based sport played on a 24-foot by 24-foot court divided into four equal quadrants: Prime, Major, Minor, and Entry. Teams consist of 14 players — exactly 7 male-identifying and 7 female-identifying athletes — with 2 players from each team active on the grid at any time.

The objective is to outscore the opposing team through Eliminations, Grid Holds, and Gridlocks, while managing rotations, serving strategy, and positional control. Gridball rewards athleticism, tactical intelligence, and team coordination in equal measure.

1.3 Evolution of the Sport

Gridball was conceived by Jaylon G. Ballard, drawing inspiration from four square and boxball — playground games played by generations of

children around the world. His vision was to take the accessibility and joy of those games and build something worthy of professional competition.

Version 1.0 of this rulebook established the sport's foundational rules. Version 2.0 refines those rules based on careful review, resolving inconsistencies, clarifying mechanics, and adding new structural elements — including the co-ed roster requirement, Grid Advantage Starters, and the updated metrics system — that make the NGL a more complete and equitable league.

Court dimensions are set at 12×12 feet per quadrant for Version 2.0. The NGL reserves the right to revisit court size in future editions based on playtesting data with elite athletes.

1.4   How to Use This Rulebook

This rulebook is organized sequentially from foundational concepts through detailed regulations. The Table of Contents provides a high-level overview. The Glossary defines all key terms. The Appendices provide reference materials for officials, franchise operators, and players.

For officials and referees, this rulebook is a procedural manual. For players and coaches, it is the definitive competitive guide. For franchise operators, it establishes the operational and structural requirements of NGL membership.

All updates and revisions from Version 1.0 are incorporated directly

into the body of this document. Version 2.0 is the controlling document

for all NGL-sanctioned play from the date of publication forward.

THE GAME
OF GRIDBALL

2. The Game of Gridball

2.1 Origins and Concept

Gridball evolved from four square and boxball — two of the most universally played playground games in the world. These games require quick reflexes, spatial awareness, and strategic positioning, all within a compact playing area. Gridball takes those core elements and builds a professional sport around them: adding team dynamics, a rotation system, a comprehensive scoring structure, and a competitive framework designed for elite athletes.

2.2 Core Concept

At its core, Gridball is about control and elimination. Two players from each team occupy the four quadrants of the grid simultaneously. Using serves and returns, players attempt to force opponents into errors — failed returns that result in Eliminations, rotating them off the grid and earning points for the opposing team.

Control of the Prime and Major quadrants is the central strategic objective. Teams that dominate these positions dictate the pace of play and have the greatest opportunity to accumulate bonus scoring through Grid Holds and Gridlocks.

2.3 Objective

The objective of Gridball is to outscore the opposing team across four quarters of play. Points are earned through three mechanisms:

- Eliminations — forcing an opponent off the grid through an

unreturnable ball.

- Grid Holds — maintaining control of the Major quadrant for four consecutive rounds.
- Gridlocks — maintaining control of the Prime quadrant for four consecutive rounds.

The team with the higher score at the end of four quarters wins the match. If the score is tied, overtime is played.

2.4 Basic Gameplay

A Gridball match features two teams of 14 players each, with 2 players from each team — one team in Prime and Major, the opposing team in Minor and Entry — active on the grid at any given time. The remaining 12 players on each team serve as substitutes.

Each round begins with the player in the Prime quadrant serving the ball. The ball must bounce once in the Prime quadrant before being directed to an opponent's quadrant. The receiving player must return the ball after one bounce, directing it to any other quadrant. Play continues until an Elimination occurs.

2.4.1 Rotation and Elimination

When a player is eliminated, the following sequence occurs immediately:

- The eliminated player leaves the grid.
- Their teammate advances one position in the Z-Formation: Entry Minor Major Prime.
- The team's designated Next In Player enters the grid at the Entry quadrant.

This rotation system ensures continuous play and requires all players to be prepared to occupy any quadrant at any time.

2.5   Grid Advantage

Grid Advantage is the strategic benefit of beginning a half with your team's players in the Prime and Major positions — the two most powerful quadrants on the grid.

2.5.1   Determining Grid Advantage

Prior to the start of the match, a coin toss is conducted at center court. The home team's captain calls heads or tails. The winner of the coin toss chooses whether to hold Grid Advantage for the first half (Quarters 1 and 2) or the second half (Quarters 3 and 4). Grid Advantage automatically goes to the other team for the remaining half.

2.5.2   Grid Advantage Application

At the start of each half, the team holding Grid Advantage for that half places their two designated Grid Advantage Starters in Prime and Major. Their opponents begin in Minor and Entry. This positioning applies only at the start of each half — Quarters 2 and 4 carry over whatever grid positioning existed at the end of the preceding quarter.

2.6   Key Elements

2.6.1   The Grid

The Grid is the playing surface: a 24-foot by 24-foot square divided into four equal quadrants of 12 feet by 12 feet each. The quadrants are:

- Prime — Upper-left quadrant. The serving position and most

strategically powerful location on the grid.

- Major — Upper-right quadrant. Strong offensive position supporting Prime.

- Minor — Lower-left quadrant. A transitional position requiring defensive awareness.

- Entry — Lower-right quadrant. The position where the Next In Player enters the grid after an Elimination.

2.6.2 Player Positions and Quadrant Confinement

Each active player is assigned to one quadrant and must remain within that quadrant's 12×12-foot boundary during play. Players may not cross into another quadrant while the ball is in play. Crossing a quadrant boundary while striking the ball constitutes a Foot Fault.

Players may move freely within their assigned quadrant. The 12×12-foot space is intentionally designed to challenge professional athletes — requiring rapid lateral movement, precise positioning, and anticipation within a confined area.

2.6.3 The Serve

Every round begins with the Prime player serving the ball. The serve must be executed underhand, with the ball bouncing once in the Prime quadrant before traveling to an opponent's quadrant. The Prime player may target any of the three other quadrants.

2.6.4 Eliminations

A player is eliminated when they fail to make a legal return. Specific

elimination criteria are defined in Section 6.3. Upon Elimination, the rotation system activates immediately and play resumes without delay.

2.6.5 Continuous Play

Gridball is designed for continuous action. Play stops only for Eliminations, fouls, timeouts, and official stoppages. The speed of rotations and the fast-paced nature of the game demand endurance, focus, and rapid decision-making from all players.

2.7 Spirit of the Game

Gridball is built on the values of competition, sportsmanship, and inclusivity. Players, coaches, and officials are expected to compete with intensity while maintaining respect for opponents, referees, and the integrity of the sport.

The co-ed structure of the NGL — with every team required to field both male-identifying and female-identifying athletes — reflects the league's foundational belief that Gridball is a sport for everyone, and that the best teams will be those that develop every player to their full potential regardless of gender.

COURT
AND EQUIPMENT

3. Court and Equipment

3.1   The Gridball Court

The court, referred to as The Grid, is the central playing surface of Gridball. It is a precisely dimensioned square divided into four equal quadrants, surrounded by an out-of-bounds area and spectator facilities.

3.1.1   Dimensions

The Gridball court is a square measuring 24 feet by 24 feet (7.32 meters by 7.32 meters), divided into four equal quadrants. Each quadrant measures 12 feet by 12 feet (3.66 meters by 3.66 meters).

Figure 3.1 --- Official Gridball Court Schematic

Note: The NGL may review and expand court dimensions in future editions based on playtesting data with elite athletes. Any dimension changes will be announced through official NGL channels with adequate advance notice to franchises.

3.1.2   Quadrant Names and Positions

Each quadrant has a designated name, position, and strategic function:

- Prime — Upper-left. The serving quadrant and primary position of strategic control.

- Major — Upper-right. Secondary offensive position; eligible for Grid Hold bonus scoring.

- Minor — Lower-left. Transitional defensive position.

- Entry — Lower-right. Entry point for the Next In Player following an Elimination.

3.1.3 Surface

The playing surface must be hardwood flooring or an approved hardwood equivalent, treated for consistent ball bounce and player traction. The surface must be smooth with slight texture to provide grip for players while maintaining predictable ball speed. Court color shall be neutral and must contrast clearly with the ball and boundary markings.

3.1.4 Court Markings

All court markings must be clearly visible and precisely applied:

- Outer Boundary — Solid line marking the full perimeter of the 24×24-foot grid.
- Quadrant Lines — Solid lines dividing the grid into four equal 12×12-foot quadrants.
- Service Lines — 1-foot (30.48 cm) lines marking legal serving positions within the Prime quadrant.
- Center Circle — A 2-foot (60.96 cm) diameter circle at the intersection of all four quadrants, used for pre-game coin toss ceremonies.
- Quadrant Labels — Each quadrant must be labeled with its official name (Prime, Major, Minor, Entry) in lettering visible to players and officials.

3.1.5 Out-of-Bounds Area

A clear out-of-bounds area must surround the grid on all sides:

- Minimum standard: 5 feet on all sides.
- Official NGL venue requirement: Minimum 10 feet on all sides.

- The out-of-bounds area must be visually distinct from the playing surface through a change in color, texture, or both.

- The out-of-bounds area serves as the referee observation zone and player transition space during rotations.

3.1.6 Spectator Areas

In professional NGL venues, spectator seating must provide unobstructed sightlines to the entire grid from all positions. Designated media areas must be positioned to allow broadcast coverage without interference with play or officiating. Player bench areas for both teams and the Officials Table must be positioned outside the referee observation area, as specified in Appendix 12.5.

3.2 The Gridball

The Gridball is the official ball of the sport, specifically designed to balance speed, control, and durability at the professional level.

3.2.1 Specifications

- Diameter: 8.5 inches (21.59 cm)

- Material: Rubber or approved rubber composite

- Weight: Approximately 10 ounces (283 grams)

- Surface: Textured for consistent grip

- Bounce Standard: When dropped from 6 feet onto the court surface, the ball must return to approximately 65% of its original height (3.9 feet)

- Color: Bright, high-visibility color — approved colors to be specified by the NGL for each season

3.2.2 Ball Inspection and Replacement

Prior to each match, the head referee and team captains jointly inspect the match ball. A ball that fails the bounce standard, shows visible damage, or does not meet NGL specifications shall be replaced before play begins. If a ball becomes damaged during play, the head referee may call a stoppage to replace it at their discretion.

3.3 Player Equipment

3.3.1 Uniforms

Each player is issued four uniforms per season by their franchise:

- Home Short Sleeve
- Home Long Sleeve
- Away Short Sleeve
- Away Long Sleeve

All four uniforms for a given kit (home or away) must be identical in color, number placement, sponsor placement, and NGL compliance. The only variable between a player's home short sleeve and home long sleeve uniforms is sleeve length.

Sleeve length is the player's individual choice on a game-by-game basis. Both players active on the grid simultaneously must wear the same kit type — either both in home uniforms or both in away uniforms. A player in a home short sleeve and their teammate in a home long sleeve are considered compliant.

Uniform specifications:

- Jersey numbers must be clearly visible. Minimum height: 6 inches on the back, 4 inches on the front.

- The NGL official logo patch must appear on the sleeve of all uniforms — this is non-negotiable.

- Matching athletic shorts in the team's color scheme are required.

- Court shoes with appropriate hardwood traction are required.

Franchise operators control all aspects of uniform design beyond these minimums, including color scheme, logo placement, and sponsor arrangements.

3.3.2   Protective Gear

Elbow pads and knee pads are optional but recommended, particularly for players in defensive positions. Headbands and wristbands are permitted for sweat management. All protective gear must be soft and non-restrictive.

3.3.3   Prohibited Equipment

Gloves and grip-enhancing devices are prohibited. Any equipment deemed by the head referee to provide an unfair competitive advantage or to pose a safety risk to any player shall not be permitted.

Figure 3.1 — Official Gridball Court Schematic
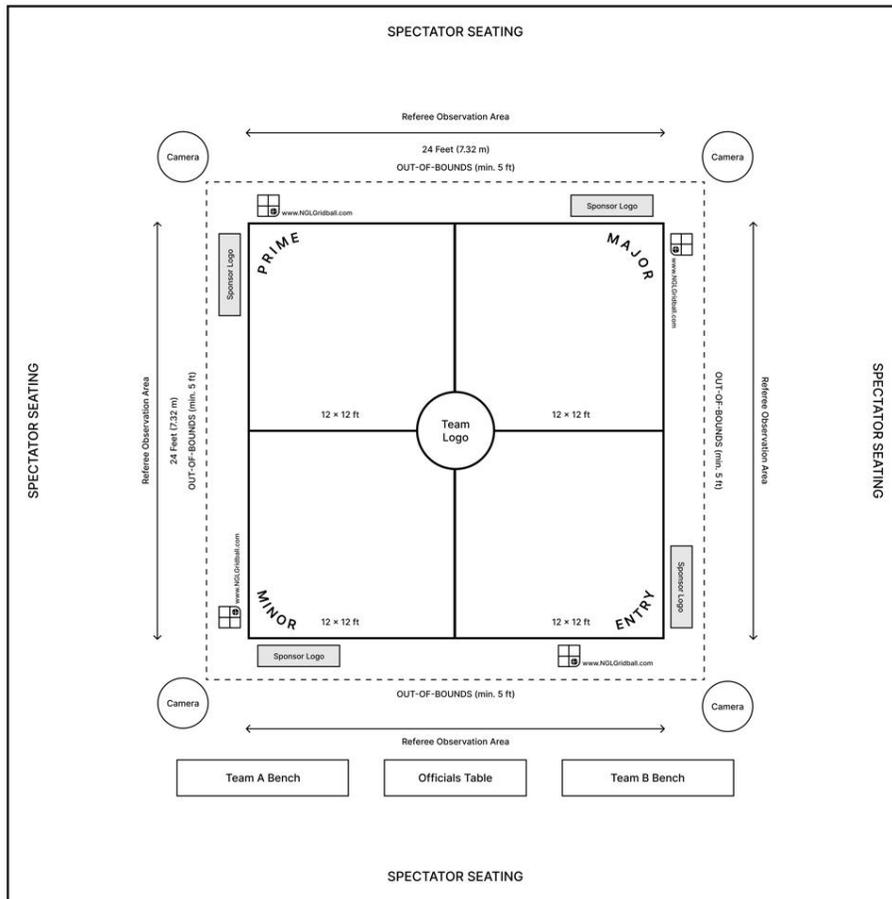
Gridball Court Schematic

Official Gridball Court — 24 ft × 24 ft (7.32 m × 7.32 m) · Each Quadrant: 12 ft × 12 ft

TEAMS
AND PLAYERS

4. Teams and Players

4.1   Team Composition

Each NGL team roster consists of exactly 14 players. At any given moment during a match, 2 players from each team are active on the grid — one occupying Prime or Major (for the team with positional advantage) and the other occupying Minor or Entry. The remaining 12 players serve as substitutes, waiting to enter as the Next In Player following an Elimination or during a coaching substitution.

4.1.1   Co-Ed Roster Requirement

This is a foundational rule of the National Gridball League and may not be waived under any circumstances.

There is no requirement for gender balance among the two players active on the grid at any time. Any combination of players from the 14-person roster may be fielded, provided all other substitution and rotation rules are followed. The co-ed requirement applies to roster composition only, not to in-game deployment.

A team that cannot field a compliant 14-person roster at the time of match commencement forfeits the match. Roster compliance is verified by league officials prior to each match.

4.2   Player Positions

All players must be prepared to occupy any of the four quadrant positions. While players may develop specializations in practice, the rotation system requires versatility from every member of the roster.

- Prime — Upper-left quadrant. The serving position and primary position of strategic control. The Prime player initiates every round.

- Major — Upper-right quadrant. Offensive support position. Eligible for Grid Hold bonus scoring.

- Minor — Lower-left quadrant. Transitional defensive position. No bonus scoring eligibility.

- Entry — Lower-right quadrant. The entry point for the Next In Player. Requires rapid adaptation to ongoing game action.

4.2.1 Z-Formation Rotation

Player positions rotate in a Z-Formation following every Elimination: When a player is eliminated, their teammate advances one position in the Z-Formation. The Next In Player enters at Entry. This rotation is immediate and automatic — play resumes as soon as the Next In Player is in position.

4.2.2 Grid Advantage Starters

Grid Advantage Starters are the two players designated by the coaching staff to occupy Prime and Major at the start of any half in which their team holds Grid Advantage. This designation is made fresh by the coaching staff before each qualifying half and must be communicated to the head referee prior to the start of that half.

Grid Advantage Starters represent the highest-profile strategic designation a coaching staff makes in a given match. The choice of which players to place in Prime and Major at the start of each half directly

shapes the team's opening strategy, serving approach, and early rotation sequence.

Grid Advantage Starters are subject to all standard substitution and rotation rules once the half begins. The designation applies only to the starting positions at the top of each half.

4.3 Substitutions

4.3.1 Regular Substitutions

Regular substitutions may occur between quarters, after an Elimination, or during a timeout. There is no limit to the number of substitutions per match. All substitutions must follow the Next In Player rule.

4.3.2 In-Game Substitutions

In-game substitutions occur automatically when a player is eliminated. The Next In Player must be staged and ready to enter the grid immediately upon their teammate's Elimination. Any delay in the Next In Player taking position constitutes a Time Wasting infraction under Section 8.1.2.

4.4 Next In Player Mechanic

The Next In Player is the player from the bench designated to enter the grid at the Entry quadrant following any Elimination. Before each round begins, the coaching staff must identify the Next In Player. This designation may change between rounds.

4.4.1 Strategic Use

Coaches may use the Next In Player designation strategically:

- Defensive scenarios — designating a strong defensive player when facing an aggressive opponent in Prime.

- Serving advantage — placing a powerful server as Next In when preparing to contest the Prime position.

- Fatigue management — rotating fresh players in high-intensity periods to maintain energy and execution.

4.5 Coaching and Staff Roles

4.5.1 Head Coach

The Head Coach is the primary decision-maker for the team. Responsibilities include managing rotations and substitutions, designating Grid Advantage Starters, calling timeouts, managing challenges, and directing in-game strategy.

4.5.2 Assistant Coaches

Assistant Coaches support the Head Coach with specialized focus areas such as offensive systems, defensive positioning, or individual player development. They may communicate with players during timeouts and between quarters.

4.5.3 Strength and Conditioning Coach

Responsible for player physical preparation, injury prevention, and in-game recovery management. Works closely with medical staff to monitor player readiness.

4.5.4 Medical Staff

Medical staff are responsible for player health and safety during all

matches and practices. They have authority to remove a player from competition for medical evaluation at any time, in coordination with the head referee. See Appendix 12.6 for Injury Protocols.

4.5.5 Analyst / Scout

Responsible for opponent analysis, game footage review, and performance data interpretation. Provides coaching staff with strategic intelligence before and during matches.

4.5.6 Team Manager

Manages administrative and logistical operations including scheduling, travel, equipment, and league compliance documentation.

4.5.7 Mental Performance Coach (Optional)

Some franchises may employ a Mental Performance Coach to support player focus, resilience, and team cohesion. This role is optional and not required for NGL membership.

GAME STRUCTURE

5. Game Structure

5.1   Quarters and Time

A standard Gridball match consists of four quarters of continuous play.

Each quarter is 16 minutes in length. A 2-minute break separates each

quarter, with a 12-minute halftime break between the second and third

quarters.

The game clock runs continuously except during Eliminations, timeouts,

and official stoppages called by the head referee. At the conclusion of

the fourth quarter, if the score is tied, overtime is played.

5.2   Overtime

If the match is tied at the end of the fourth quarter, overtime is

played in sudden-death format. Overtime has no time limit. The first

team to achieve a 2-elimination-point lead over their opponent wins the

match.

5.2.1   Overtime Possession

Overtime possession is awarded to the team that held Grid Advantage at

the conclusion of the fourth quarter. That team begins overtime with

their players in Prime and Major, holding the first serve.

5.2.2   Overtime Scoring

Overtime scoring follows the same structure as regulation play. All

standard scoring mechanics — Eliminations, Grid Holds, and Gridlocks

— remain active. Clutch Play designation applies to all plays during

overtime. The match concludes the moment one team achieves a 2-point

lead.

5.3   Timeouts

Each team is allocated 7 timeouts per match, with a maximum of 2

timeouts permitted per quarter. Timeouts are 75 seconds in duration.

Either team may call a timeout before any serve, regardless of which

team has possession.

Unused timeouts do not carry over between quarters. Teams begin each

quarter with their remaining match timeouts, subject to the

2-per-quarter maximum.

5.4   Possession Rules

Possession in Gridball refers to which team occupies the Prime quadrant.

The team whose player holds Prime controls the serve and initiates each

round. Possession shifts through the Elimination and rotation system

throughout each quarter.

At the start of each half, possession is determined by Grid Advantage.

The team holding Grid Advantage for that half begins with their Grid

Advantage Starters in Prime and Major, giving them the opening serve.

GAMEPLAY RULES

6. Gameplay Rules

6.1 Serving

6.1.1 Prime Serve

Every round begins with the Prime player executing the serve. The serve must be made underhand. The ball must bounce once within the Prime quadrant before traveling to any opponent's quadrant. The Prime player may target Major, Minor, or Entry.

A serve that does not bounce in the Prime quadrant before crossing into another quadrant, or that fails to reach an opposing quadrant, is called a Fault. Each player is allowed one Fault per serving turn. A second consecutive Fault results in loss of serve — possession transfers to the opposing team, and the grid rotates accordingly.

6.1.2 Serve Rotation

The team holding Grid Advantage controls the opening serve at the start of each half. Within each quarter, serve transfers naturally through the Elimination and rotation system — whenever a team gains the Prime position, their player in Prime holds the serve for the next round.

6.1.3 Overtime Serve

In overtime, the team that held Grid Advantage at the end of the fourth quarter retains possession and controls the first serve of overtime.

6.2 Ball Movement

6.2.1 Legal Return

Once the ball has been served and bounces in a receiving player's

quadrant, that player must return it. A legal return must:

- Be struck after the ball bounces exactly once in the player's quadrant.

- Land in a different quadrant from the one it was struck from.

- Be executed while the player is within the boundary of their assigned quadrant.

A return that lands in the same quadrant it was struck from, fails to bounce at all before being struck, or is struck by a player outside their quadrant boundary is an illegal return and results in an Elimination.

6.2.2 Quadrant Confinement During Play

Players must remain within the 12×12-foot boundary of their assigned quadrant at all times during play. Players may move freely within their quadrant to position themselves for optimal returns. A player may not reach across a quadrant boundary to play a ball.

A Foot Fault is called when a player strikes the ball while any part of their body is outside their quadrant boundary. Foot Fault penalties are defined in Section 8.1.1.

6.2.3 Strategic Play

Within the rules of legal returns and quadrant confinement, players are encouraged to use the full range of shot-making available to them: sharp angles, low-bounce shots, high-velocity drives, and soft touch returns. Strategic deception and coordinated team play between the two active

grid players are core elements of high-level Gridball.

6.3   Eliminations

6.3.1   Elimination Criteria

A player is immediately eliminated if they:

- Fail to return the ball after it has bounced once in their quadrant.

- Allow the ball to bounce more than once in their quadrant.

- Return the ball out of bounds (outside the 24×24-foot grid).

- Return the ball into their own quadrant.

- Strike the ball while outside their quadrant boundary (Foot Fault,

third offense — see Section 8.1.1).

- Commit any foul that carries an Elimination penalty under Section 8.

6.3.2   Result of Elimination

When a player is eliminated, all of the following occur simultaneously:

- The opposing team is awarded 1 point.

- The eliminated player exits the grid immediately.

- The remaining teammate advances one position in the Z-Formation

(Entry Minor Major Prime).

- The Next In Player enters the grid at the Entry quadrant.

- The round resets and a new serve begins from Prime.

6.4   Rotation System

6.4.1   Rotation Mechanics

The Z-Formation rotation is the structural engine of Gridball. Every

Elimination triggers a rotation. The sequence is always Entry Minor

Major Prime. No quadrant may be left unoccupied during play. If a

rotation would leave a quadrant empty — such as when both players on one team are eliminated simultaneously — a new Next In Player enters at Entry before play resumes.

Figure 6.1 --- Z-Formation Grid Rotation Path

6.4.2 Continuous Rotation

The rotation system operates continuously throughout each quarter. Teams must always have a designated Next In Player ready before each round. Failure to have a Next In Player staged and ready to enter constitutes a Time Wasting infraction under Section 8.1.2.

6.5 Out-of-Bounds

6.5.1 Defining Out-of-Bounds

A ball is out of bounds when it lands outside the 24×24-foot grid boundary — that is, outside the Outer Boundary line as defined in Section 3.1.4. The out-of-bounds area surrounding the grid is not part of the playing surface.

Note: Quadrant boundary lines are in-bounds. A ball landing on any line within the grid is considered in play. The only out-of-bounds determination is whether the ball has crossed the Outer Boundary of the full 24×24-foot grid.
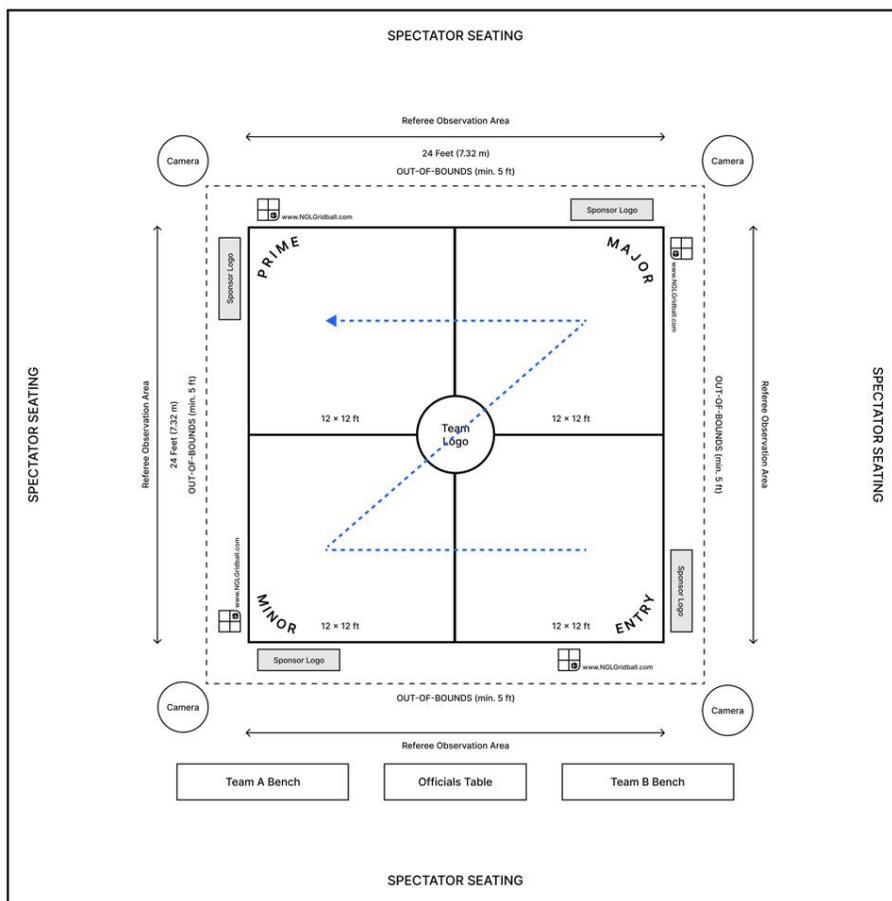
6.5.2 Out-of-Bounds Returns

If a player returns the ball out of bounds, that player is immediately eliminated. The out-of-bounds call is an automatic Elimination — no warning or graduated penalty applies. The opposing team is awarded 1

point and the standard rotation is triggered.

Figure 6.1 — Z-Formation Grid Rotation Path

Gridball Court - Grid Rotation Path

Player Rotation Sequence: Entry Minor Major Prime (Z-Formation)

SCORING

7. Scoring

7.1   Points System

Gridball's scoring system rewards three categories of achievement:

direct Eliminations, sustained positional dominance through Grid Holds,

and superior positional control through Gridlocks. The balance between

these scoring opportunities drives both offensive aggression and

defensive strategy.

7.1.1   Eliminations

7.1.2   Grid Holds

7.1.3   Gridlocks

A Gridlock is the most difficult scoring achievement in Gridball.

The Prime player must serve and control play for four consecutive rounds

to earn the Gridlock bonus.

7.2   Scoring Methods Explained

7.2.1   Elimination Points

Eliminations are the primary and most frequent scoring mechanism. Every

Elimination awards 1 point regardless of which quadrant the eliminated

player occupied. Multiple Eliminations within a single rally sequence

— though rare given the rotation system — each award 1 point

independently.

Elimination points accumulate rapidly during strong runs of play,

creating momentum shifts that can swing a quarter's outcome

significantly.

7.2.2 Grid Hold Points

A Grid Hold is achieved when the same player remains in the Major quadrant for four consecutive complete rounds. The round counter resets if that player is eliminated or rotates out of Major for any reason.

Upon successfully completing the fourth consecutive round in Major without Elimination, 3 points are immediately awarded to that player's team.

Grid Hold tracking is maintained by the official scorekeeper and communicated to the head referee. Players and coaches are responsible for tracking their own round counts.

7.2.3 Gridlock Points

A Gridlock is achieved when the same player remains in the Prime quadrant for four consecutive complete rounds, including executing the serve at the start of each round. The Gridlock counter resets if the Prime player is eliminated, commits a double fault, or loses possession for any other reason.

Upon successfully completing the fourth consecutive round in Prime without Elimination or loss of serve, 7 points are immediately awarded to that player's team. The head referee signals a confirmed Gridlock per the hand signal in Appendix 12.3.

7.3 Continuous Rounds Scoring

A round is defined as a complete serve-and-return sequence concluding in

an Elimination, a fault resolution, or a scoring event. Rounds occur

continuously within each 16-minute quarter. The clock does not stop

between rounds except during official stoppages.

The continuous nature of rounds creates compounding scoring

opportunities. A team on a dominant run can accumulate Elimination

points, Grid Hold points, and Gridlock points within the same sustained

period of control — creating scoring surges that can dramatically

shift the match score in a short window of time.

FOULS
AND PENALTIES

8. Fouls and Penalties

Gridball's foul and penalty system is designed to deter violations, maintain fair play, and protect the integrity of competition. Infractions are categorized by severity, with escalating penalties for repeated offenses.

8.1 Minor Infractions

8.1.1 Foot Faults

A Foot Fault is called when a player strikes the ball while any part of their body is outside the boundary of their assigned quadrant.

- First Offense: Warning issued by the referee.
- Second Offense: The offending team loses 1 point.
- Third Offense: The offending player is eliminated. The opposing team

is awarded 1 point. Standard rotation applies.

8.1.2 Time Wasting

Time Wasting occurs when a player takes an unreasonable amount of time to serve, when the Next In Player is not staged and ready to enter at the Entry quadrant, or when any player unnecessarily delays the resumption of play.

- First Offense: Warning issued by the referee.
- Second Offense: The opposing team is awarded 1 point.
- Third Offense: The offending player is eliminated. The opposing team

is awarded 2 points and gains possession (Prime serve). Standard rotation applies.

8.2 Moderate Infractions

8.2.1 Double Touch

A Double Touch occurs when a player strikes the ball twice consecutively before it reaches another quadrant.

- First Offense: The opposing team is awarded 1 point.
- Second Offense: The offending player is eliminated. The opposing team is awarded 2 points.

8.2.2 Illegal Serve

An illegal serve includes any serve that does not bounce in the Prime quadrant before traveling to an opponent's quadrant, is executed overhand, or otherwise violates Section 6.1.1.

- First Offense: Warning issued by the referee.
- Second Offense: The opposing team is awarded 1 point.
- Third Offense: The offending player is eliminated. The opposing team is awarded 2 points.

8.3 Severe Infractions

8.3.1 Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Unsportsmanlike Conduct includes aggressive behavior, taunting, disrespectful gestures, verbal abuse directed at opponents, officials, or spectators, or any act deemed disrespectful by the officiating crew.

- First Offense: The offending team loses 1 point.
- Second Offense: The offending player is ejected from the match.
- Third Offense (if applicable before ejection): The offending player is eliminated, the opposing team is awarded 2 points, and the

opposing team gains possession. The ejected player's team plays

without a substitute for the remainder of the match.

8.3.2   Deliberate Interference

Deliberate Interference is any intentional action to obstruct, impede,

or interfere with an opponent's ability to play the ball or to move

within their quadrant.

- First Offense: The opposing team is awarded 2 points.
- Second Offense: The offending player is eliminated. The opposing

team gains possession (Prime serve).

8.4   Technical Infractions

8.4.1   Uniform Violations

A uniform violation occurs when a player's equipment does not comply

with Section 3.3.

- First Offense: Warning issued. Player must correct the violation

immediately.

- Second Offense: The offending team loses 1 point.
- Third Offense: The offending player is eliminated until the

violation is corrected.

8.4.2   Equipment Malfunction

Equipment malfunction includes a broken shoe, improperly inflated ball,

or any equipment failure that disrupts play.

- First Offense: Timeout called to rectify the issue. No penalty.
- Second Offense (if issue persists beyond reasonable time): The

opposing team is awarded 1 point.

8.5 Ejections and Forfeitures

8.5.1 Ejection Rules

A player who accumulates sufficient infractions or commits a severe single offense may be ejected by the head referee. Upon ejection, the offending team continues with their remaining eligible roster players. No further substitution is permitted for the ejected player's position for the remainder of the match.

8.5.2 Forfeiture Rules

Forfeiture occurs under two distinct circumstances:

* Pre-Match Forfeiture: If a team cannot field a minimum of 7 eligible players at the time of scheduled match commencement, they forfeit the match before play begins.

* Mid-Match Forfeiture: If a team is reduced to fewer than 2 eligible players at any point during a match — due to ejections, injuries, or any other cause — they forfeit the match immediately.

In all forfeiture cases, the opposing team wins by default. The forfeiting team receives a loss in the official standings and is subject to any additional league disciplinary review at the Commissioner's discretion.

OFFICIATING

9. Officiating

9.1   Role of the Referees

Referees are the on-court authorities responsible for enforcing all

rules, managing game flow, and ensuring the integrity of every NGL

match. In professional NGL matches, four referees are positioned around

the grid, each responsible for specific quadrants and oversight areas.

9.1.1   Referee Responsibilities

- Monitor all gameplay within their assigned quadrant zones.
- Call Eliminations, Foot Faults, Double Touches, Illegal Serves, and

all other infractions as they occur.

- Manage the serve clock and Time Wasting infractions.
- Track Grid Hold and Gridlock round counts in coordination with the

official scorekeeper.

- Handle challenges and initiate replay review when applicable.
- Communicate decisions clearly to players, coaches, and the

scorekeeper.

9.1.2   Referee Authority

Referees hold final on-court decision-making authority. Their rulings

are binding except where overturned through the formal challenge and

replay review process defined in Section 9.3. Arguing with referee

decisions, outside of the formal challenge process, constitutes

Unsportsmanlike Conduct under Section 8.3.1.

9.2   Referee Placement and Duties

9.2.1 Referee Positions

- Referee 1 — Oversees Prime and Major quadrants. Primary responsibility for serve legality and upper-half ball movement.

- Referee 2 — Monitors Major and Entry quadrants. Primary responsibility for right-side ball movement and legal returns.

- Referee 3 — Supervises Entry and Minor quadrants. Primary responsibility for out-of-bounds calls and lower-half infractions.

- Referee 4 — Observes Minor and Prime quadrants. Primary responsibility for Foot Faults, rotation compliance, and left-side infractions.

9.2.2 Referee Rotation

To ensure impartiality, referees rotate their assigned quadrant responsibilities at halftime. The head referee coordinates rotation assignments.

9.2.3 Communication

Referees communicate with each other through official hand signals (see Appendix 12.3), earpiece systems where available, and pre-established protocols. Synchronized decision-making between referees is required for Elimination calls that span multiple quadrants.

9.3 Handling Disputes and Challenges

9.3.1 Challenge System

Each team is permitted 2 challenges per half. Challenges may be used to dispute calls related to Eliminations, scoring events, or fouls. A coach

must signal a challenge within 15 seconds of the disputed play.

Teams must have at least one timeout remaining to initiate a challenge.

A team with no timeouts remaining may not challenge.

9.3.2 Replay Review

In official NGL venues equipped with replay technology, the head referee may consult video footage to adjudicate challenges. The review process is as follows:

- The coach signals a challenge within 15 seconds of the disputed play.

- The head referee calls a stoppage and initiates replay review.

- The head referee reviews available footage and announces a final decision within 60 seconds.

- The decision is announced to both teams and is final. No further dispute is permitted.

In venues without replay technology, challenges are adjudicated by a panel of all four referees by majority vote, with the head referee casting the deciding vote in the event of a tie.

PLAYER AND TEAM METRICS

Performance Metrics at a Glance

GPR — GRID PERFORMANCE RATING (Single-Game)

$$GPR = (E \times 1) + (GH \times 3) + (GL \times 7) + (A \times 2) + (DP \times 1) + (CP \times 2) - (F \times 2)$$

E = Eliminations · GH = Grid Holds · GL = Gridlocks · A = Assists · DP = Defensive Plays · CP = Clutch Plays · F = Fouls

Note: GPR may be negative if foul penalties exceed scoring contributions. No floor on GPR.

AGPR	GTD%	GC%
Avg Grid Performance Rating	Grid Time Distribution	Grid Control
Sum of GPRs ÷ Games Played	(Time in quadrant ÷ Total game time) × 100	(Rounds holding Prime & Major ÷ Total rounds) × 100

TPI — TEAM PERFORMANCE INDEX

$$TPI = (PD \times 0.4) + (AGPR \times 0.3) + (GC \times 0.2) + (TPP \times 0.1)$$

PD = Point Differential (0.4) · AGPR = Team Average GPR (0.3) · GC = Grid Control % (0.2) · TPP = Team Play Points (0.1)

10. Player and Team Metrics

The NGL employs a comprehensive performance metrics system designed to evaluate individual players and teams with precision and consistency. These metrics inform awards, contract evaluations, team strategy, and official league records.

10.1 Grid Performance Rating (GPR)

The Grid Performance Rating is the primary metric for evaluating a player's performance in a single game. GPR captures all significant in-game contributions — positive and negative — in a single numerical value.

10.1.1 GPR Formula

10.1.2 Component Definitions

- E — Eliminations: Number of times the player successfully forced an opponent off the grid.

- GH — Grid Holds: Number of Grid Hold completions (4 consecutive rounds in Major without Elimination).

- GL — Gridlocks: Number of Gridlock completions (4 consecutive rounds in Prime without Elimination or loss of serve).

- A — Assists: See definition below.

- DP — Defensive Plays: See definition below.

- CP — Clutch Plays: See definition below.

- F — Fouls: Number of penalized infractions committed during the game.

Assist (A) — An Assist is credited when a player's legal return

directly forces an opponent into a compromised position from which the player's teammate scores an Elimination on the immediately following play, with no intervening touches by any other player. The head referee has final authority on all Assist designations.

Defensive Play (DP) — A Defensive Play is recorded when a player successfully returns a ball that, in the official judgment of the head referee, carried significant elimination potential — including but not limited to sharp-angle returns, low-bounce shots, or high-velocity serves returned under pressure. Standard returns made under routine game conditions do not qualify. The head referee has final authority on all Defensive Play designations.

Clutch Play (CP) — A Clutch Play is automatically credited for any Elimination, Grid Hold completion, or Gridlock completion achieved during the final 2 minutes of any quarter, or during any round of overtime. Clutch Play designation requires no referee discretion — all qualifying plays within the defined time window are automatically recorded as Clutch Plays by the official scorekeeper.

Note on Negative GPR: A player's GPR may be negative if foul penalties exceed scoring contributions. Negative GPR is informative — it signals a foul-heavy, low-contribution performance — and is published openly in official statistics. There is no floor on GPR.

10.2 Average Grid Performance Rating (AGPR)

The Average Grid Performance Rating measures a player's consistent

performance across multiple games.

————————————————————————–

> **AGPR = (Sum of GPRs) ÷ (Number of Games Played)**

————————————————————————–

10.2.1 Calculation Periods

- Full season AGPR — calculated across all games played in the regular season.

- Rolling 10-game AGPR — calculated across the most recent 10 games played.

10.2.2 Minimum Games Requirement

A player must have participated in a minimum of 5 games for their AGPR to be officially recognized in league statistics. Players below this threshold are listed as 'qualifying' until the minimum is reached.

10.3 Grid Time Distribution (GTD)

GTD reflects the percentage of game time a player spends in each quadrant, providing insight into player role and positional versatility.

————————————————————————–

> **GTD% = (Time in quadrant ÷ Total game time) × 100**

————————————————————————–

GTD is reported as four percentages — one per quadrant — totaling 100%. Example: Prime 30%, Major 28%, Minor 22%, Entry 20%. GTD is tracked and reported by the official scorekeeper.

10.4 Games Played (GP)

Games Played is a count of the number of matches in which a player has participated. A player must have entered the grid at least once during a match to be credited with a GP. GP provides context for all other metrics and indicates player availability and durability across a season.

10.5 Interpretation and Use of Metrics

- GPR — Game MVP selection, single-game performance evaluation, post-match analysis.

- AGPR — Season awards, contract negotiations, overall player rankings, trade valuations.

- GTD — Positional analysis, player development planning, strategic preparation.

- GP — Durability tracking, context for all other metrics, playing time management.

10.6 Team Performance Index (TPI)

The Team Performance Index evaluates overall team success, combining individual player metrics with team-wide statistics.

10.6.1 TPI Components

- PD — Point Differential: The difference between points scored and points allowed across all games in the calculation period.

- AGPR — Team Average GPR: The average of all players' AGPRs, reflecting the collective consistent performance of the roster.

- GC — Grid Control: The percentage of total rounds in which the

team occupied both Prime and Major simultaneously (see 10.6.2).

- TPP — Team Play Points: The sum of all Assists and Defensive Plays recorded by the team per match, reflecting collaborative and defensive execution.

10.6.2 Grid Control (GC) Definition

Grid Control is calculated as the percentage of total rounds in which a team's two active players simultaneously occupied both the Prime and Major quadrants.

————————————————————————-

GC% = (Rounds team held both Prime and Major) ÷ (Total rounds played) × 100

————————————————————————-

GC is tracked by the official scorekeeper on a per-round basis. At the conclusion of each round, the scorekeeper records whether the team held both Prime and Major at the time of the serve. Example: A team holds both Prime and Major for 47 of 80 total rounds in a match GC = 58.75%.

10.7 Official Record Keeping

All metrics are officially recorded and verified by NGL-certified statisticians. Franchises receive detailed statistical reports following each match. Season-long statistics are publicly available through official NGL channels. Any disputes regarding official statistics must be submitted to the league office within 48 hours of the match in question.

LEAGUE STRUCTURE

11. League Structure

11.1 Season Format

The NGL season is structured to maximize competitive engagement while avoiding conflict with major established sports leagues. The season runs from late July through early December.

11.1.1 Regular Season Game Count

- Year 1 (Inaugural Season): 36 games per team — 18 home, 18 away.
- Year 2 and beyond: 48 games per team — 24 home, 24 away.

The reduced Year 1 schedule allows inaugural franchises to establish operations, build local fanbases, and stress-test league logistics before transitioning to the full schedule in Year 2.

11.1.2 Conference Structure

The NGL is organized into two conferences: the Atlantic Conference and the Pacific Conference. Each conference consists of 8 franchises. Franchise placement within conferences is determined by the Commissioner's office based on geographic market, competitive balance, and franchise operational readiness.

The NGL shall begin with 16 franchises, 8 per conference. Future expansion will be managed by the Commissioner's office in accordance with Section 11.4.

11.1.3 Schedule Distribution

In the Year 1 regular season of 36 games per team:

- 24 Conference Games — 3 games against each of the 7 other teams in

the same conference, plus 1 additional rivalry game determined by the Commissioner's office prior to the season.

- 12 Interconference Games — distributed across all 8 teams in the opposing conference, with exact matchup distribution determined by the Commissioner's office prior to each season.

In Year 2 and beyond, with 48 games per team, the Commissioner's office will establish the updated schedule distribution and communicate it to all franchises no later than 60 days before the regular season begins.

11.2 Playoffs and NGL Championship Cup

11.2.1 Playoff Qualification

Eight teams qualify for the postseason — the top 4 teams from each conference, ranked by regular season record. In the event of tied records, tiebreakers are applied in the following order: head-to-head record, point differential, and TPI ranking.

11.2.2 Playoff Format

The NGL Playoffs are single-elimination throughout all conference rounds:

All conference playoff rounds are single-elimination — one loss ends the season. The NGL Championship Cup is the sole best-of-series round in the postseason.

11.2.3 NGL Championship Cup

The NGL Championship Cup is a best-of-three series between the Atlantic Conference Champion and the Pacific Conference Champion. The series is

played at a neutral site, with the host city rotating annually.

- Format: Best-of-three. The first team to win 2 games wins the NGL Championship Cup.

- Site: Neutral, rotating host city selected by the Commissioner's office.

- Designation: Each Championship is designated by Roman numeral corresponding to the season number (NGL Championship Cup I, NGL Championship Cup II, etc.).

- Trophy: The NGL Championship Cup trophy is presented to the winning team at the conclusion of the final game of the series.

Home court advantage within the NGL Championship Cup series is awarded to the team with the better regular season record. If records are equal, the team from the conference that produced the higher total combined regular season point differential holds home court.

11.2.4 Optional Play-In Tournament

The Commissioner's office may elect to implement a Play-In Tournament prior to the Conference Quarterfinals. If implemented, the Play-In would involve seeds 3 through 6 from each conference competing for the final playoff positions. Play-In Tournament structure and format will be announced no later than 30 days before the end of the regular season if it is to be used.

11.3 Team Ranking and Progression

Teams are ranked within their conference based on regular season win-loss record. The GPR and TPI metrics are used as tiebreakers and for

seeding determinations as described in Section 11.2.1.

End-of-season rankings determine playoff seeding, draft positioning (where applicable in future seasons), and schedule weighting for the following season.

11.4 Team Expansion and Franchise Guidelines

The NGL will begin with 16 franchises distributed between the Atlantic and Pacific Conferences. Future expansion will be managed carefully to protect competitive balance and franchise value.

- Expansion criteria include demonstrated fan market demand, ownership group financial stability, venue compliance with NGL court and facility standards, and league-wide competitive balance review.

- New franchises must meet all operational, financial, and infrastructural standards set by the league office prior to receiving final approval.

- Franchise identity — team name, colors, logo, and brand — is entirely within the control of the franchise ownership group, subject to NGL approval for compliance with league branding guidelines.

- The NGL retains all rights to league branding. Franchise branding rights are owned by franchise operators within the boundaries of their franchise agreement.

APPENDICES

12. Appendices

The appendices provide supplementary reference materials for players,

coaches, officials, and franchise operators. These materials support the

core rules but do not supersede them.

12.1   Official Terminology Guide

The following terms have specific meanings within the NGL and this

rulebook:

- Assist (A) — GPR metric. Credited when a player's return directly

sets up their teammate's Elimination on the immediately following

play with no intervening touches.

- Clutch Play (CP) — GPR metric. Automatically credited for any

Elimination, Grid Hold, or Gridlock during the final 2 minutes of

any quarter or during overtime.

- Defensive Play (DP) — GPR metric. Recorded for a successful return

of a ball carrying significant elimination potential, per head

referee judgment.

- Elimination — When a player fails to make a legal return and is

removed from the grid.

- Entry — The lower-right quadrant. Entry point for the Next In

Player.

- Foot Fault — Infraction called when a player strikes the ball

while outside their quadrant boundary.

- GPR (Grid Performance Rating) — Single-game performance metric.
Formula: $(E\times1)+(GH\times3)+(GL\times7)+(A\times2)+(DP\times1)+(CP\times2)-(F\times2)$.

- AGPR (Average Grid Performance Rating) — Season-long average of GPR across games played.

- Grid Advantage — The strategic benefit of starting a half with players in Prime and Major. Determined by pre-match coin toss.

- Grid Advantage Starters — The two players designated to occupy Prime and Major at the start of a half when their team holds Grid Advantage.

- Grid Control (GC) — TPI metric. Percentage of rounds in which a team held both Prime and Major simultaneously.

- Grid Hold — 3-point scoring event. Achieved by holding the Major quadrant for 4 consecutive rounds without Elimination.

- Gridlock — 7-point scoring event. Achieved by holding the Prime quadrant for 4 consecutive rounds without Elimination or loss of serve.

- GTD (Grid Time Distribution) — Metric reflecting percentage of game time spent in each quadrant.

- Major — Upper-right quadrant. Grid Hold eligible.

- Minor — Lower-left quadrant. Transitional position. No bonus scoring.

- Next In Player — The designated player who enters the grid at Entry following an Elimination.

- NGL Championship Cup — The annual best-of-three championship series between the Atlantic and Pacific Conference champions.

- Overtime — Sudden-death continuation of play when regulation ends tied. First team to gain a 2-point lead wins.

- Prime — Upper-left quadrant. Serving position. Gridlock eligible.

- Prime Serve — The serve executed by the Prime player to begin each round.

- TPI (Team Performance Index) — Team metric: $(PD\times0.4)+(AGPR\times0.3)+(GC\times0.2)+(TPP\times0.1)$.

- Z-Formation Rotation — The mandatory player rotation sequence: Entry Minor Major Prime.

12.2 Example Scenarios

Scenario 1: Elimination and Rotation

Team A has Player X in Prime and Player Y in Major. Team B has Player W in Minor and Player V in Entry. Player W fails to return a serve from Player X. Player W is eliminated. Team A scores 1 point. Player V (Team B) advances from Entry to Minor. Team B's designated Next In Player enters at Entry. Play resumes with Player X serving from Prime.

Scenario 2: Grid Hold

Player X (Team A) has been in Major for 3 consecutive rounds without Elimination. In the 4th round, Player X successfully returns the ball and no Elimination occurs. The scorekeeper confirms the 4th consecutive round in Major. The head referee signals a Grid Hold. Team A is awarded 3 points.

Scenario 3: Gridlock

Player X (Team A) serves from Prime for 4 consecutive rounds. In each

round, no Elimination is suffered by Team A. After the 4th consecutive round, the head referee signals a Gridlock. Team A is awarded 7 points. The Gridlock counter resets.

Scenario 4: Failed Challenge

Team B challenges an Elimination call. The head referee reviews the play. The original call stands. Team B loses 1 challenge (from 2 to 1 remaining for the half) and 1 timeout (from their match allocation of 7). Team B now has 1 challenge and 6 timeouts remaining.

Scenario 5: Clutch Play

With 1 minute and 45 seconds remaining in the 3rd quarter, Player X scores an Elimination. The scorekeeper automatically records this as a Clutch Play. Player X's GPR gains 1 point (Elimination) plus 2 points (Clutch Play) = 3 GPR points for this single action.

12.3 Referee Hand Signals

The following are the official NGL referee hand signals. All four on-court referees are required to use these signals consistently during all sanctioned matches.

SIGNAL 01 — START OF QUARTER

Blow whistle. Raise one arm straight up, index finger extended.

SIGNAL 02 — END OF QUARTER

Cross arms overhead forming an X, then lower both arms to sides.

SIGNAL 03   PRIME SERVE

Extend one arm forward, pointing toward the Prime quadrant.

SIGNAL 04 — ELIMINATION
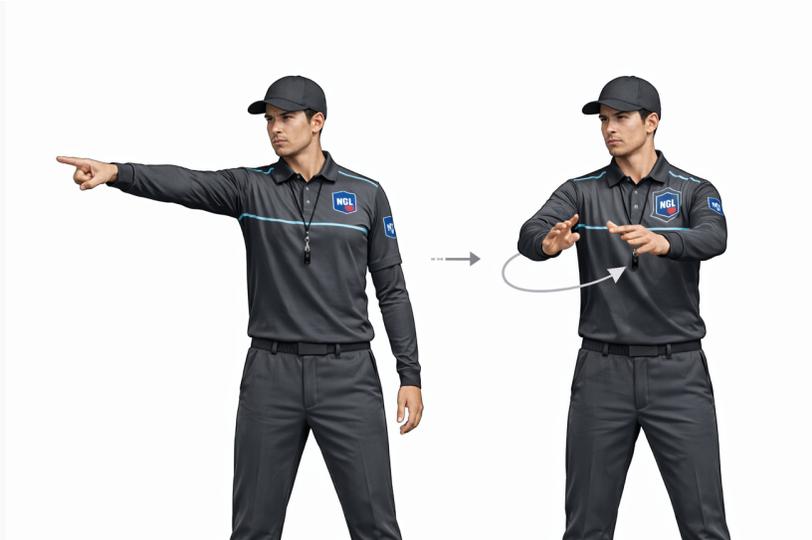
Part 1: Point directly at the eliminated player. Part 2: Rotate both hands to indicate grid rotation.

SIGNAL 05   **GRID HOLD**

Hold both hands at face height, thumbs and index fingers forming a diamond shape.

SIGNAL 06 — GRIDLOCK
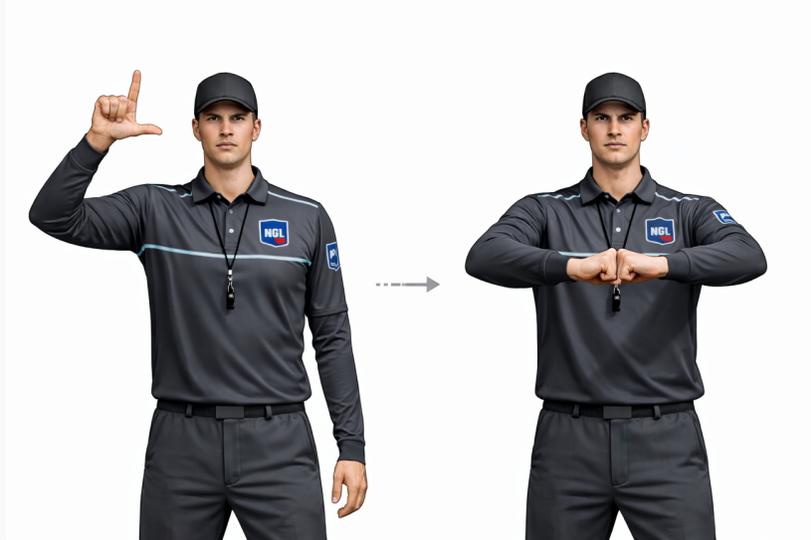
Part 1: Right arm at a right angle with hand in an L-shape. Part 2: Make fists with both hands and press them together.

SIGNAL 07 — OUT OF BOUNDS

Both arms extended straight out to the sides, index fingers pointing outward.

SIGNAL 08 — ILLEGAL SERVE

Raise one arm straight up, palm open and flat facing upward.

SIGNAL 09 — TIMEOUT

Both arms extended outward at shoulder height, palms facing outward.

SIGNAL 10 — CHALLENGE

Raise one hand with a clenched fist to shoulder height.

SIGNAL UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Grasp wrist firmly at chest level with the opposite hand.

SIGNAL 12 — DELIBERATE INTERFERENCE
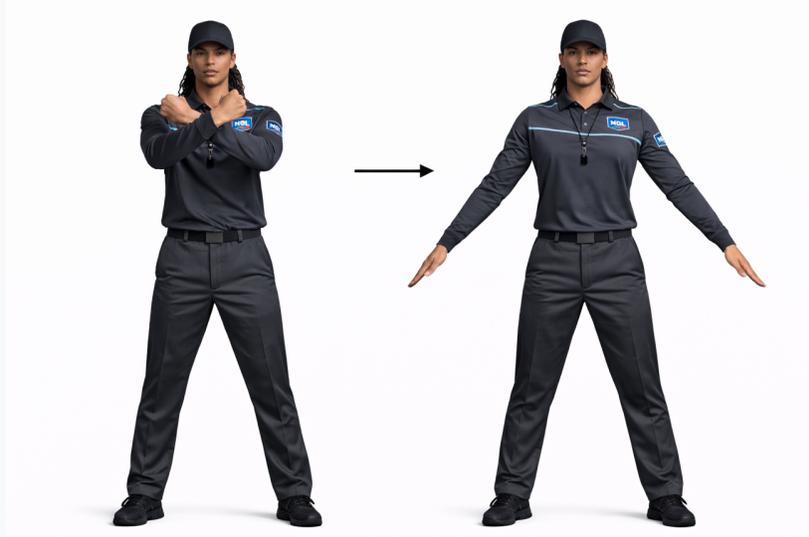
Part 1: Cross both arms in front of chest with fists clenched. Part 2: Spread arms outward to sides.

SIGNAL 13 — FOOT FAULT

Bend forward at the waist and extend one arm downward, pointing directly at your own foot to indicate a quadrant boundary violation.

SIGNAL 14 — DOUBLE TOUCH

×2
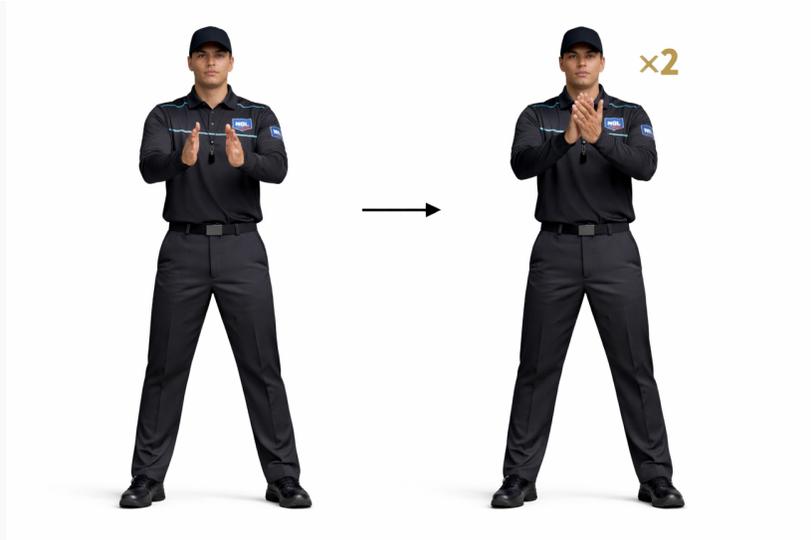
Part 1: Palms open facing each other at chest height. Part 2: Clap palms together firmly. Repeat twice (×2).

12.4 Challenge and Replay Review Procedures

Challenges must be initiated by the Head Coach within 15 seconds of the disputed play. The coach signals a challenge using the official challenge signal (clenched fist raised). Challenges may not be initiated by players on the grid.

Upon receiving a challenge signal, the head referee calls a stoppage. In venues with replay technology, the head referee reviews footage and announces a decision within 60 seconds. In venues without replay technology, all four referees confer and reach a majority decision, with the head referee casting the deciding vote in the event of a tie.

Outcomes: Successful challenge — call overturned, team retains challenge and timeout. Failed challenge — original call stands, team loses one challenge and one timeout. No further dispute of the reviewed call is permitted.

12.5 League Guidelines for Stadium Setup

- Court Placement — The Grid must be positioned centrally within the venue with a minimum of 10 feet of out-of-bounds space on all four sides in official NGL venues.

- Team Benches — Team A Bench and Team B Bench positioned outside the referee observation area, one on each side of the Officials Table, along one baseline of the court.

- Officials Table — Positioned at center of the bench baseline, outside the out-of-bounds area.

- Camera Positions — Four cameras positioned at the four corners of the outer boundary, outside the out-of-bounds area, for full court coverage.

- Spectator Seating — Must provide unobstructed sightlines to the full grid from all seating positions.

- Media Areas — Designated positions that do not encroach on the referee observation area or player bench areas.

- Sponsor Signage — Permitted on all four sides of the outer boundary area and on the court surface outside the grid, per NGL sponsor placement guidelines.

12.6 Injury Protocols

Player safety is the NGL's highest operational priority. All injury protocols supersede competitive considerations.

- Injury Timeout — Each team is permitted 1 injury timeout per quarter. When a player is injured, they must be substituted with the Next In Player immediately. The injured player may not return to the grid until cleared by the team's medical staff.

- Medical Evaluation — Any player showing signs of a serious injury must be evaluated by the team's medical staff before being cleared to return to competition. The head referee may suspend play to allow evaluation at any time.

- Concussion Protocol — Any player suspected of suffering a concussion must be removed from the match immediately and undergo a formal concussion assessment before any return to competition. No

same-day return to play is permitted for a confirmed or suspected concussion.

- Emergency Protocol — In the event of a serious injury requiring emergency medical attention, the head referee has authority to suspend the match indefinitely. Match resumption, rescheduling, or forfeiture determination will be made by the Commissioner's office.

GLOSSARY

13. Glossary

Key terms used throughout this rulebook, listed alphabetically.

- **AGPR (Average Grid Performance Rating)** — A player's average GPR across all games played. Minimum 5 games for official recognition.

- **Assist** — GPR metric. Credited when a player's return directly forces an opponent into a position from which the player's teammate immediately scores an Elimination, with no intervening touches.

- **Ball Movement** — The motion of the Gridball through legal returns across quadrants during a round.

- **Challenge** — A formal request by a team's Head Coach to review a referee's call. Each team has 2 challenges per half.

- **Clutch Play** — GPR metric. Automatically credited for any Elimination, Grid Hold, or Gridlock in the final 2 minutes of any quarter or during overtime.

- **Co-Ed Roster Requirement** — The mandatory NGL rule requiring each team roster to include exactly 7 male-identifying and 7 female-identifying athletes.

- **Defensive Play** — GPR metric. Recorded for a successful return of a ball carrying significant elimination potential per head referee judgment.

- **Elimination** — The removal of a player from the grid after failing to make a legal return or committing a qualifying foul.

- **Entry** — The lower-right quadrant. The position where the Next In Player enters the grid.

- Foot Fault — Infraction for striking the ball while outside the boundary of one's assigned quadrant.

- GC (Grid Control) — TPI metric. Percentage of rounds in which a team held both Prime and Major simultaneously.

- GP (Games Played) — The number of matches in which a player has entered the grid.

- GPR (Grid Performance Rating) — Single-game individual performance metric. Formula: $(E\times1)+(GH\times3)+(GL\times7)+(A\times2)+(DP\times1)+(CP\times2)-(F\times2)$.

- Grid Advantage — The strategic benefit of beginning a half with players positioned in Prime and Major. Awarded by coin toss prior to the match.

- Grid Advantage Starters — The two players designated by the coaching staff to occupy Prime and Major at the start of a half when their team holds Grid Advantage.

- Grid Hold — 3-point scoring event. Achieved by holding the Major quadrant for 4 consecutive rounds without Elimination.

- Gridlock — 7-point scoring event. Achieved by holding the Prime quadrant for 4 consecutive rounds without Elimination or loss of serve.

- GTD (Grid Time Distribution) — Metric reflecting the percentage of game time a player spends in each quadrant.

- Major — The upper-right quadrant. Grid Hold eligible.

- Minor — The lower-left quadrant. Transitional position. No bonus scoring eligibility.

- Next In Player — The player designated to enter the grid at Entry

following a teammate's Elimination.

- NGL Championship Cup — The annual championship series. Best-of-three between the Atlantic and Pacific Conference champions at a neutral rotating site.

- Overtime — Sudden-death play following a tied regulation. First team to gain a 2-point lead wins.

- Point Differential (PD) — The difference between a team's total points scored and total points allowed across a defined period.

- Prime — The upper-left quadrant. The serving position. Gridlock eligible.

- Prime Serve — The underhand serve executed by the Prime player to initiate each round.

- Rotation — The Z-Formation movement of players following each Elimination: Entry Minor Major Prime.

- Round — A complete serve-and-return sequence concluding in an Elimination or scoring event.

- The Grid — The official name for the Gridball playing court. A 24×24-foot square divided into four 12×12-foot quadrants.

- Timeout — A 75-second break called by a team before any serve. Maximum 7 per match, 2 per quarter.

- TPI (Team Performance Index) — Team performance metric. Formula: (PD×0.4)+(AGPR×0.3)+(GC×0.2)+(TPP×0.1).

- TPP (Team Play Points) — The sum of all Assists and Defensive Plays recorded by a team per match.

- Z-Formation Rotation — The mandatory rotation sequence following

each Elimination: Entry Minor Major Prime.

INDEX

14. Index

Alphabetical reference guide to key topics, rules, and concepts in this rulebook.