

# **STONEWALL KICKBALL**

**Pittsburgh, PA**

## **Stonewall Kickball Pittsburgh Spring 2023 Rule Book**

Stonewall Kickball - Pittsburgh (SKP) brings together members of the LGBTQ+ community, our allies, and friends to play kickball games on Sundays. It's about more than just kickball though; it's about building a real community, full of diversity, that interacts in a variety of settings. We believe every Pittsburgher, regardless of athletic ability or previous experience with sports leagues, should have the ability to feel comfortable playing kickball. Our league aims to bring together a group of people who enjoy each other's company, and participate in friendly and fun competition.

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## 1. General

### 1.1. Social Atmosphere & Code of Conduct

- 1.1.1. We encourage each player to join the “Stonewall Kickball - Pittsburgh (SKP)” Facebook Group Page, and to actively engage with other members of the league.
- 1.1.2. All participants must adhere to all rules and regulations posted for the use of an O’Hara Township Park, including no alcohol, glass containers of any kind, or drug use.
- 1.1.3. If a player appears visibly intoxicated and SKP Leadership deems that it is unsafe for that player to continue playing, they will be removed from the game.
- 1.1.4. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. For minor offenses, a warning may be issued. For any major infraction that is deemed violent, harassing, and/or inappropriate in any way will result in the player being ejected from the game. SKP Leadership may also decide to take the following actions:
  - 1.1.4.1. 1st Infraction: Player suspended for 2 weeks of scheduled games, including double-header weeks.
  - 1.1.4.2. 2nd Infraction: Player suspended for the remainder of season and all league activities.
  - 1.1.4.3. 3rd Infraction: Player permanently banned from participating in leagues and activities.
- 1.1.5. No refund will be issued for suspension from the league for any infraction.

### 1.2. Playing Field & Ball

- 1.2.1. SKP Leadership is responsible for providing a suitable playing field and will be responsible for preparing a playing field similar to a baseball field to the specifications described in section 5.1.
- 1.2.2. The official size kickball will be approximately 10” in diameter.

## 2. Teams & Players

### 2.1. Player Eligibility & Attire

- 2.1.1. All players must be 21 years of age or older before the first official game, properly registered through the approved registration process, and sign the most current league liability waiver.
- 2.1.2. Players may only play on one team per season.
- 2.1.3. Players must have an official league t-shirt for the current season on their person at all times. In cold weather, players may layer with their shirts. In hot weather, players may play shirtless.
- 2.1.4. League t-shirts may be slightly altered but must remain serviceable. Additionally, no alterations may be made that destroy or obstruct the official Stonewall logo on the front or the sponsor logos on the back. For example, players may cut off their sleeves, add artistic iron-ons or prints, and conservatively add slits to their shirts, but any extreme alterations will render the shirt and player ineligible to play.
- 2.1.5. If a player’s league t-shirt is lost, damaged, stolen, or deemed to be in violation of rule 2.1.4, generic replacement t-shirts will be made available for a cost of \$10 to the player.
- 2.1.6. Players must wear shoes to participate both in kicking and fielding. For the safety of all players, plastic or rubber cleats with dull spikes are highly encouraged. No metal cleats allowed.
- 2.1.7. Players are permitted to wear protective equipment, such as athletic braces, that does not offer any unfair performance advantage. Personal equipment deemed performance enhancing by the Umpire and/or SKP Leadership, such as gloves that offer extra grip, must be removed in order for the player to be eligible to play. Gloves may be worn while kicking and base running.
- 2.1.8. Jersey numbers should be written on the front of the jersey within the designated circle. There will also be spots for names and preferred pronouns to be added. While highly encouraged, neither are required.

### 2.2. Fielding Requirements & Kicking Order

- 2.2.1. Teams may field no more than 11 players per inning. 8 players are required to start a game.

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- 2.2.2. In order to avoid a forfeit during the regular season, teams are permitted to use up to 2 substitutes. Subs must be registered players and can only be used to help a team get to the minimum 8 required players. If a team starts a game using subs and has team members arrive late, they will immediately take the place of the subs. Subs are not permitted in the playoffs.
- 2.2.3. Fielding teams must assign one pitcher and one catcher in each inning.
- 2.2.4. Any player that is present and eligible to play must be placed in the kicking order and, given reasonable opportunity in regards to game length, must play 2 innings in the field if they so desire. Teams may not discourage any player from playing. If SKP Leadership determines that a team willfully and intentionally discouraged a member of their team from playing, the team will receive a forfeit and may also be subject to additional penalties after league review.
- 2.2.5. Players that are not present at the start of the game should be excluded from the kicking order. If a player arrives late and the entire team has not kicked yet, they will be added to the end of the kicking order. If the entire team has already kicked, the player will be ineligible to kick but may still play the field.
- 2.2.6. For regular season games, home and away teams will be determined by Captain doing a best of 3 series of rock/paper/scissors. The winning Captain will have the choice of being the home or away team, with the home team taking the field first and the away team kicking first. For playoff games, the higher seeded team will get to choose if they would prefer to be the home or away team.

### **2.3. Injuries & Extenuating Circumstances**

- 2.3.1. All participants in the league assume the risk of injury. Stonewall Sports - Pittsburgh, Stonewall Kickball - Pittsburgh, SKP Leadership, and its volunteers shall not be liable for injury to person or loss or damage to personal property arising from or in any way resulting from participation in the league.
- 2.3.2. If any player is injured during the game, play will immediately be stopped. The Umpire will determine if the play resulted in any outs and award runners bases as necessary. Generally, if the ball was in the infield when the injury occurred, runners should be awarded the base they were progressing towards. If the ball was in the outfield, an additional base may be awarded.
- 2.3.3. Injured runners that were deemed safe may be replaced by the last player to get out. If no outs have been made yet, the last player in the kicking order should be used.
- 2.3.4. Timeouts will not be charged for play stoppages resulting from injuries.

## **3. Game Length & Scheduling**

### **3.1. Game Length and Overtime**

- 3.1.1. Regulation games are typically at least 5 innings and up to 7 innings long. At the 50 minute mark of a game, the current inning should be completed but no new inning should begin unless 5 innings have not been played. Early round playoff games will be 5 innings with a 10 run mercy rule after 3 innings. The final 3 games will be 7 innings with a 10 run mercy rule. There is no time limit for playoff games.
- 3.1.2. Games canceled for any reason before 5 innings have been played will be invalidated, rescheduled, and replayed. If 5 innings have been played, the game will be considered to have been completed.
- 3.1.3. If the run deficit at the end of 5 innings is 10 runs or greater, the Mercy Rule will be invoked and the game will be ended. If this occurs in the bottom of the inning, the game should be ended the moment the kicking team takes a 10 run lead. If a team is losing by 10 or more runs before the 5th inning, the Captain of the losing team may request that the Umpire end the game early.
- 3.1.4. Regulation games can end in a tie. During the playoffs, if a game is tied after play would have normally concluded, additional innings will be played until one team has a lead after a completed inning.
- 3.1.5. If it is the last inning of the game as defined within this section and the home team is winning upon completion of the top of the inning, the game will be ended and the home team will not kick again.

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- 3.1.6. Every effort should be made to keep the game moving at a reasonable pace. If a team is thought to be intentionally delaying a game, they will be given a warning. If this continues after the warning, the Umpire may award bases or declare outs depending on the offending team.
- 3.1.7. **Overtime will occur solely during playoffs.** Keeping the same home and away assignments, the last player to be called out will begin the inning on 2nd base. From there, each batter gets 1 pitch and 1 pitch only. The inning plays as normal with 3 outs and the home team always having an opportunity to bat.

**Foul ball = OUT | Strike = OUT | Ball = WALK | Batted Ball = outcome of play**

## 3.2. Scheduling, Standings, & Playoffs

- 3.2.1. League and team schedules will be released within 1 week of the 1st week of competitive games and made available through LeagueApps and through the league Facebook group.
- 3.2.2. During the regular season, weekly team rankings are based on points accrued through weekly matchups. Teams are awarded 1 point for a win, 0.5 points for a tie, and 0 points for a loss or forfeit.
- 3.2.3. If 2 or more teams are tied, the following tie-breaker rules apply:
- 3.2.3.1. Team with more wins.
  - 3.2.3.2. If not resolved, then by “head-to-head” results.
  - 3.2.3.3. If not resolved, then by team with less runs allowed.
  - 3.2.3.4. If still not resolved, then by SKP Leadership coin toss.
- 3.2.4. For playoffs, teams will be ranked in the playoff bracket based on team rankings after the last full week of regular season game play has been completed.
- 3.2.5. Playoffs are a single-elimination tournament scheduled using a seeded bracket in which matchups are determined by the final regular season standings. Top teams may be granted incremental byes in various rounds to run a more expedited tournament and to allow for more competitive matchups.

## 3.3. Cancellations, Forfeits, & Re-Schedules

- 3.3.1. Games will be played in rainy weather unless conditions on the field are unplayable or the weather is deemed dangerous by SKP Leadership. Cancellation decisions will be made as early as possible and communicated to each player via the email they used to register and on the league Facebook group.
- 3.3.2. Umpires will consult with SKP Leadership and a decision will be made to call a game due to darkness or lightning at the beginning of or during any game. The amount of innings played will determine whether the game will be considered complete or will be rescheduled.
- 3.3.3. Potential make-up dates will be announced at the time of registration. By registering, all players agree to play on these dates if necessary and the league will not be responsible for players being unavailable.
- 3.3.4. If a team is not able to supply the minimum number of players as prescribed by rule 2.2.1 within 10 minutes of the scheduled start time of the game, the game will be considered a forfeit. For playoff games teams must be ready to play at the scheduled time.
- 3.3.5. A forfeit will count as a 5-0 loss against the offending team.

# 4. Game Rules

## 4.1. General

- 4.1.1. Play ends when the pitcher has controlled possession of the ball inside the pitcher’s circle. Players may continue to run bases while the ball is being thrown to the pitcher, but may not proceed past their current base once possession is gained by the pitcher inside of the circle.

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- 4.1.2. Umpires, Base Refs, and Captains are all responsible for ensuring that baselines and the field remain free of non-playing players and spectators.
- 4.1.3. If spots in the field contain excessive water or mud, the Umpire may rule, prior to the start of the game, that any kicked ball that lands in that area will halt play. If near the infield, the kicker will be awarded the base they were progressing towards. If in the outfield or if a fielding player causes the ball to travel into these areas, an additional base may be awarded to runners.
- 4.1.4. If a ball is popped or significantly deflated during a play, the play will be replayed with a new ball.

## 4.2. Kicking

- 4.2.1. Kickers may not touch the ball with their hands, even if they are doing so to assist the other team. If this occurs, a warning will be issued the first time and the kicker will be called out on subsequent offenses.
- 4.2.2. Bunting is permitted.
- 4.2.3. There are no home runs. A kicked ball that goes over the fence in fair territory will result in a dead ball and 2 bases awarded to all players. This rule also applies if the ball strikes any trees, shrubbery, or man-made objects that are above or beyond the fence line, regardless of where the ball lands afterward.
- 4.2.4. A ball that is kicked into the air along the foul lines that is likely to have landed fair but strikes tree branches or foliage will be ruled a dead ball and a re-kick will occur. A ball also cannot be caught for an out in this scenario.
- 4.2.5. If the 3rd out of an inning is a result of a runner leaving the base early as described in rule 4.5.5, the player that was at the plate when the 3rd out occurred should be the first kicker in the next inning.
- 4.2.6. If a fair ball is thrown or kicked outside of the playing area and travels into an area in which a player cannot easily retrieve the ball, play will be halted and all runners may advance to the next base in which they were already progressing towards.

## 4.3. Stikes, Fouls, Balls, Fairs, & Fouls

- 4.3.1. Fouls will be counted as strikes in order to help speed up gameplay.
- 4.3.2. A strike is the following:
  - 4.3.2.1. A legal pitch within the strike zone that is not kicked. A legal pitch must touch the ground at least twice prior to reaching home plate. The strike zone extends to 1 foot on either side of home plate and 1 foot high as the ball crosses the plate measured from the center/apex of the ball.
  - 4.3.2.2. An attempted kick by the kicker in which they miss the ball entirely.
- 4.3.3. Fair and foul balls are defined as follows:
  - 4.3.3.1. A kicked ball that makes its first contact with the ground in foul territory is **foul**.
  - 4.3.3.2. A kicked ball in fair territory that is deflected into foul territory by a player is **fair**.
  - 4.3.3.3. A ball kicked into the air that is caught in foul territory is **fair**.
  - 4.3.3.4. A ball that is kicked by the kicker and deflected into fair territory by the catcher is **fair** so long as the ball travels along a path within the confines of the kicker's box and triangles that connect the kicker's box to fair territory.
  - 4.3.3.5. A ball kicked in the air that would have landed in foul territory that is touched, but not caught, by a player who has no part of their body touching the ground in fair territory is **foul**. If any part of the player's body is physically touching fair territory when they touch the ball, the ball is **fair**.
  - 4.3.3.6. A kicked ball that lands in fair territory, but touches foul territory at any time prior to reaching either first or third base is **foul**. Balls that touch foul territory after passing first or third base are **fair**.
  - 4.3.3.7. Any play in which the kicker makes contact with the ball while their planted foot is touching the ground outside of the kicker's box or the kicker makes contact with the ball while the center of the ball is outside of the box, even if only partially outside the box is **foul**.

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- 4.3.3.8. A pitch that makes contact with a kicker that did not make an effort to avoid touching the ball is **foul**.
- 4.3.3.9. A kick made at or above the kicker's knee is **foul**.
- 4.3.3.10. A ball struck by the kicker twice within the kicking box ("double kick") is a **foul**.
- 4.3.3.11. A ball that strikes any obstruction (namely tree limbs) within fair territory will be an automatic re-kick and not added to the strike count. A ball that strikes an obstruction in foul territory will be foul.
- 4.3.4. A count of 4 balls advances the kicker to first base. A ball is any un-kicked pitch that is not a strike as defined by rule 4.3.2.

#### 4.3.5.

### 4.4. Outs

- 4.4.1. A count of 3 outs by a team completes the team's half of the inning. An out is the following:
  - 4.4.1.1. When a kicker has a combined total of 2 strikes and fouls, the next strike is an out. However, in this scenario, another foul ball will not result in an out, but rather a warning. After this warning, the kicker will be out on their next strike or foul.
    - 4.4.1.1.1. Example 1: 1st pitch is a strike/foul, 2nd pitch is a strike/foul, 3rd pitch is a strike. KICKER IS OUT.
    - 4.4.1.1.2. Example 2: 1st pitch is a strike/foul, 2nd pitch is a strike/foul, 3rd pitch is a foul. WARNING ISSUED. 4th pitch is a strike/foul. KICKER IS OUT.
  - 4.4.1.2. A runner touched by a kickball at any time while not at base.
  - 4.4.1.3. A fielder tagging the runner with the ball.
  - 4.4.1.4. A fielder hitting the runner with a thrown ball. Headshots will not be counted as outs unless the player intentionally used their head to deflect the ball or were actively ducking or sliding.
  - 4.4.1.5. Any kicked ball that is caught in the air even if it would have otherwise been ruled a foul.
  - 4.4.1.6. A fielder with controlled possession of the ball that tags a base to which a runner is forced with any part of their body.
  - 4.4.1.7. A runner leaves their base before the ball is kicked per rule 4.5.5.
  - 4.4.1.8. A runner that is physically assisted by a team member. Whether or not physical contact constitutes "physically assisting" a base-runner will be at the discretion of the Umpire, and incidental contact that is not deemed to have assisted the runner will not be called as an out.
  - 4.4.1.9. A runner who runs more than 4 feet outside of the baseline in order to avoid being tagged. Leniency will be granted when a runner overruns first base and then decides to progress towards second base so long as the runner takes a straight line to second base from where they started progressing.
  - 4.4.1.10. A fielder with controlled possession of the ball tags a base in which a runner failed to tag up from as described in rule 4.5.6 after a fly ball is caught for an out.
  - 4.4.1.11. A runner who passes or touches another runner. The passing/touching runner will be ruled out.
  - 4.4.1.12. A ball that is bobbled and then caught will be considered an out, so long as it doesn't touch the ground or any other foreign object before a player catches it. Balls may bounce off other players.

### 4.5. Base Running

- 4.5.1. Runners must stay within 4 feet of the base lines, which are imaginary straight lines between bases.
- 4.5.2. All kickers should run towards and tag the safety base after kicking a fair ball from home plate.
- 4.5.3. Runners may overrun first base, but if they are not attempting to advance to second base they must head straight back to first base by turning towards the right and staying in foul territory. If they turn into fair territory, they may be tagged out by the defensive team.

- 4.5.4. Runners hindered by a fielder within the baseline who is not fielding a ball shall be safe at the base to which they were progressing. Fielders on a base trying to make a forced out should make an effort to lean out of the baseline. Runners are ultimately responsible for avoiding collisions.
- 4.5.5. Runners may not leave the base until the kicker has made contact with the ball. A base runner leaving their base before a ball is kicked will be out.
- 4.5.6. For fly balls that are caught, runners must wait until a fielder makes contact with the ball before leaving the base, also known as tagging up. They may advance once the ball comes in contact with any fielder regardless of whether the fielder catches it clean or bobbles it.
- 4.5.7. For close plays, ties at the bases go to the runner.
- 4.5.8. In certain situations, replacement runners may be used even if the runner was not injured during the kicking order of the current game. This needs to be agreed upon by both Captains and discussed with the Umpire prior to the game. If all parties agree, the player will still need to kick and be called safe on the bases.
- 4.5.9. Runs will not be counted if the third out of the inning was made on a force play, which includes catching a fly ball or any other runner being called out for any reason when they were forced to the next base.
- 4.5.10. Runners who are forced can be tagged out if they do not leave their base. However, if the runner behind them is called out on the play, the force situation is negated and the runner may return to the prior base.
- 4.5.11. Runners may slide into first base, but are required to touch the safety base as specified in rule 4.5.2.

## **4.6. Timeouts and Substitutions**

- 4.6.1. The team Captain may request up to 3, 2-minute timeouts from the Umpire. All game action in progress must be completed before a request may be made. Play ends and the Umpire calls the timeout when the Umpire deems that all immediate play is completed.
- 4.6.2. Captains are permitted to replace any field position during any inning. A Captain must utilize a timeout in order to make all substitutions from the bench.
- 4.6.3. Pitching and catching positions may only be changed once per inning during stoppages in play. The Captain is required to use a timeout to make these replacements.
- 4.6.4. If a team is out of timeouts, a substitution will no longer be possible except for cases of player injury.

## **4.7. Encroachment and Interference**

- 4.7.1. Encroachment is not permitted. 1st offense will result in a warning. Subsequent offenses will result in the kicker being awarded first base.
- 4.7.2. Encroachment is defined as:
  - 4.7.2.1. Pitchers and fielders will be ruled as encroaching if they step beyond the painted or imaginary line connecting the inner edges of first and third base.
  - 4.7.2.2. Catchers will be ruled as encroaching if they touch a kicker, run or stand in front of the kicker prior to the ball being kicked, or restricts the kicker's motion in any way. Catchers must also remain behind or parallel to the kicker at all times prior to the ball being kicked.
- 4.7.3. Encroachment will not be called on plays in which the kicker does not touch the ball.
- 4.7.4. While fielding a throw, first basemen may not touch the safety base and must keep all parts of their bodies away from the first base line, even when reaching for an inaccurate throw. Interfering with the runner in this situation will result in the runner being called safe.
- 4.7.5. If a base runner interferes with a play in progress, both the base runner and the kicker will be called out. Interference will also be called if a base runner is struck by a fair ball that has been kicked but has not been touched by a defensive player, regardless of whether or not the base runner is touching a base.

## **4.8. Umpire Rulings & Challenges**

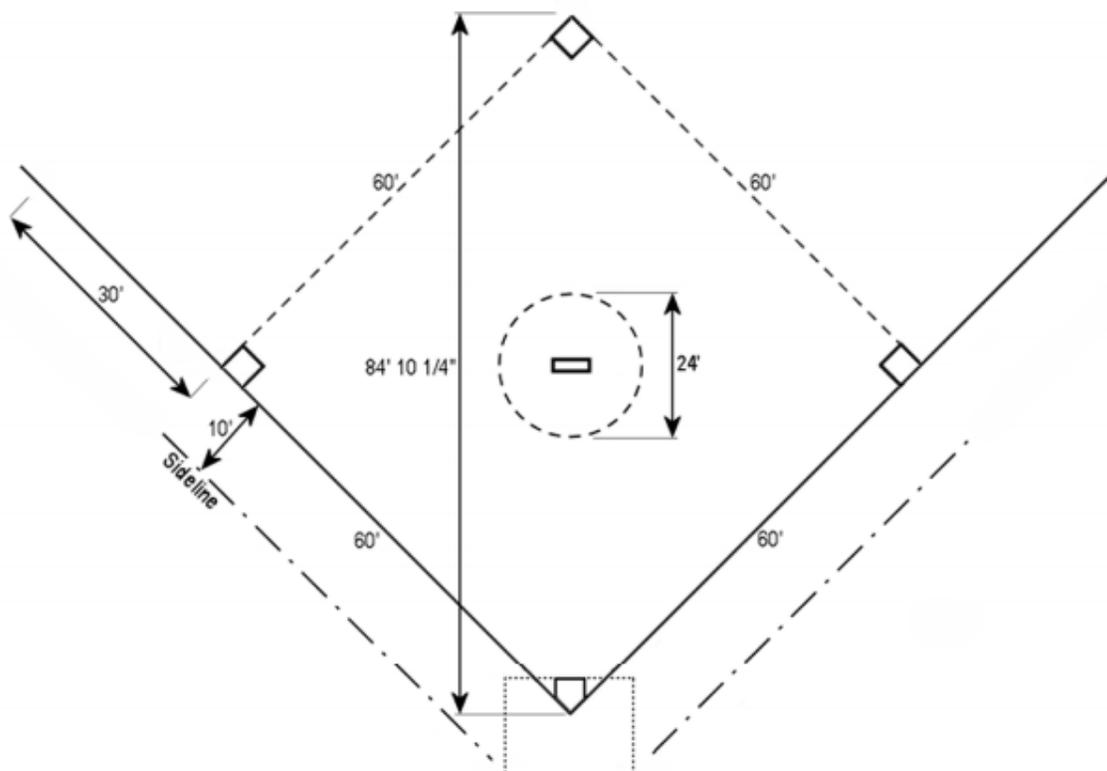
- 4.8.1. The game Umpire will be the deciding factor on all calls, even after consulting with SKP Leadership.
- 4.8.2. During challenges or any case in which the Umpire does not have a clear view of the play, they should consult with both Base Refs before making a final ruling.
- 4.8.3. If an Umpire requires clarification on a ruling, they are permitted to pause the game and consult with SKP Leadership.
- 4.8.4. If a Captain believes that an Umpire has made an incorrect ruling based on a misinterpretation of the rules, they may call a timeout and ask that a member of SKP Leadership be consulted.
- 4.8.5. Only Captains may discuss calls with the Umpire. If the Captain is unavailable, a Co-Captain or other pre-designated individual will assume this role. No more than one person per game can assume this role.
- 4.8.6. A timeout is required to challenge a call. If the Umpire reverses the call, the team will be reissued a timeout. If the call stands, they will not. If no timeouts are left, a team may not challenge.
- 4.8.7. The Umpire, in consultation with SKP Leadership, reserves the right to end a game or call a timeout at any point. If a game is ended due to violation of rule 1.1.4, the offending team will be issued a forfeit.
- 4.8.8. SKP Leadership will observe games throughout the day. If a member of SKP Leadership notices a missed or bad call, they may bring it to the attention of the Umpire. The Umpire may then use this information in consultation with their Base Refs to make the most appropriate call on the play.

## **4.9. Base Refs**

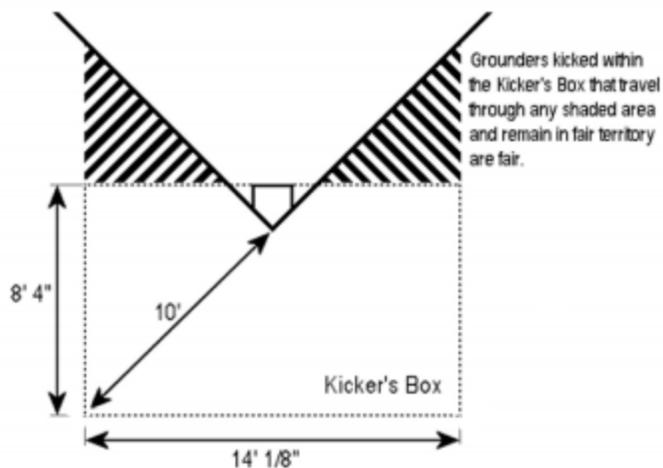
- 4.9.1. Each team may be required to supply 1 base ref each Sunday during the season.
- 4.9.2. A team that fails to supply a base ref will be penalized as follows:
  - 4.9.2.1. 1st Infraction - Team starts their next game down 5-0.
  - 4.9.2.2. 2nd Infraction - Team forfeits their next game.
  - 4.9.2.3. 3rd Infraction - Team ineligible for playoffs.

## 5. Diagrams

### 5.1. Field Measurements



### 5.2. Kicker's Box



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