

Stoolball

The Official Rules (Summary)

Daprav Stoolball Society

Introduction

Stoolball is the most exciting sport in the world. The epitome of skill and teamwork combined with the renowned Dapravian sense of fair play make it an absolute joy to watch. Even better fun is playing the game! What other sport gives you the same thrill, or fast paced action combined with the competitive edge and danger of stoolball?

Choosing Your Team

Stoolball is a full contact game requiring fast reflexes and a measure of skill with a paddle. Players also need to work well as a team and to have no fear of injury. You should choose the largest two as your defenders, but the most fearless ought to be the stool-keeper as the 'keeper cannot flinch when the ball comes towards the stool. The swiftest and surest of foot should play in the mid part of the field as they will be the fastest to the ball and may even score from there.

Last, but by no means least, come the attackers. These two are the most skilful with the paddle and should be capable of hitting an unguarded stool from the other side of the pitch with ease. They also need to be swift of foot and able to put themselves in the correct place to receive the ball.

In all you need seven stout-hearted sportsmen to form your team. One must be designated as the stool-keeper, no more than two may be designated as defenders and the others must play in the outfield and attempt to win control of the ball and glory for the team. Each team will have a Captain to control the players and ensure that they play to the spirit of the game. The Captain may play in any position on the field.

The Umpire

The umpire must be of good sight and clear mind and be conversant with the rules and spirit of the game. He shall be the sole determiner of what constitutes fair and unfair play and none shall argue during the course of the game with the umpire's decisions at least they be excluded from play. Should the umpire find that a player is acting unfairly then he may stop play and award a penalty to the opposing team. He may also warn the player, and for extreme or repeated unfair behaviour he may remove the player from the playing court.

Equipment

Each team must have its own stool, stoutly constructed from wood so as to withstand sudden impact of one or more players unbalanced, or the high speed of the ball hitting it. It must also be able to bear the weight of the stool-keeper sitting or standing on it in its defence.

Also each player must have a paddle for playing the ball. No other part of his body may be used for this purpose, save that of the 'keeper who may deliberately interject any part of his body between the ball and the stool. The paddle should be flat or convex on both sides; any player that has a concave paddle should not enter into play with it other than as a stool-keeper. The paddle must have blunt rounded edges and be at least one inch in thickness along the blade. In total it should be no more than three feet in length and at least one foot six inches. The blade should be no more than four inches across at its widest point.

One ball is required for the game, although it may be prudent to have spares available should anything befall the ball during play, it not being unknown for a ball to break when hit with extreme force. The ball should be constructed from a two-inch core of cork tightly wound with wool and then covered with buff leather. The leather should be shrunk onto the core to ensure a tight fit and therefore allow the ball to bounce.

Protective equipment may be worn if the player wishes. However any protective equipment that is worn should not be enchanted in any way whether to improve its level of protection nor to deflect or attract missiles. Perform any active measures to improve defence, movement or agility.

Playing Court

The game is played in a court 50 yards square. This should have stout walls between 12 and 18 feet high. The walls can be of either stone or wood, but should be of hardwood if so constructed to allow the ball to bounce.

The court is divided lengthways into three areas. Each team has a defence area 16 yards deep and the middle of the field is 18 yards deep. Within each defence area is a close defence area that forms a rectangle round the stool four yards deep and 16 yards wide.

The stool is positioned in the middle of the close defence area four yards from the back wall. Round the stool is marked the close defence area two yards in front and behind the stool and eight yards either side. Within this area the designated defenders and stool-keeper may tackle opposing players with no risk of penalty. The keeper may also block the ball with any part of his body so long as he remains within this area. Designated defenders may not leave the rear area except for starting play.

The middle area has a four-yard square right in the middle of the pitch. One yard from this on either side and running parallel with the team defence areas are the start lines. Each of the six start lines are 10 yards wide and they run one yard apart back towards the defence area. The line nearest to the centre of the court is known as the 'initial start line' or the 'zero line' as that is where a team that has yet to score will stand when the game is started (and re-started following one team scoring). On either side of the four-yard box there is a line ten yards from the box for the umpire to stand on when re-starting the game.

Play

The object of the game is to hit the opposing team's stool with the ball. Only the paddle may be used

to strike the ball for this purpose. Each time a stool is hit the game will be re-started by the umpire. The game ends once a team gains a clear lead of three strikes or achieves a total of 6 strikes. For every strike that a team has scored they start one-yard further back from the initial start line in the mid-field of the court.

The umpire throwing the ball into the centre of the four-yard box starts the game. Players may not move forward of the start line until the ball hits the ground inside the box. If the ball does not land inside the box then the umpire should retrieve the ball and re-start the game.

Tackling

Only the designated defenders and the stool-keeper may tackle players by making contact with them with any part of their body or with the paddle. Other players may come into contact with each other in the course of contesting possession of the ball but may not deliberately trip or hit opposing players.

Use of Magic

Magic may not be used by any player or umpire when the ball is in play. When the ball is not in play then it is permissible for a player to use magic for the purpose of healing injuries to players or to repair equipment with the permission of both captains and the umpire. In no case should magic be used to improve the capabilities of players beyond those that they started the play with.

D&D Game-related rules

Stoolball uses the combat rules for play.

order of play

Players move in initiative order and NPCs are assumed to have an init modifier of +2 (although you may vary this to suit the quality of the team you want to achieve). Where a player is acting in defence they may opt to delay action pending the outcome of a lower ranked player. (Basically they forgo their action and get an attack of opportunity if appropriate.)

Hitting the ball

To hit the ball is a DC 15 task (again NPCs have an assumed +2 skill). The paddle is a club and if the player has a relevant weapon proficiency then it should work as normal.

Once the ball is hit the player should roll against their dexterity to see how well they controlled the hit and whether the ball goes where they desired.

- On a natural 1 it goes straight up in the air.
- For DC 5 it went the correct distance but direction randomly determined by the umpire (bearing in mind the direction the ball came from).

- DC 10 goes within 90 degrees of intended direction.
- DC 15 goes where it was intended to go.
- DC 20 is required to score a goal unless within the close defence area.
- DC25 is required to score a goal from the mid-field
- DC 30 to score from the other end of the pitch.

There must be a clear line between the player and the goal to score. Any other players (including NPCs) within a yard of the direct line may get a chance to hit the ball as it passes, but must score more on their skill check than the original player did.

Tackling other players

Tackling is done as per the melee rules, damage from a paddle is 1d6 and is only subdual (except a natural 6 which does 1 HP damage and 5 subdual).

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