



World Gateball Union  
Official Gateball Rules

## Chapter 1. Ground and Equipment

### Article 1. Ground

#### Clause 1. Court (Figure 1)

##### 1. Court

(1) The court shall be a flat surface that is bounded by the outside line and rectangular in shape and clear of any obstacles.

##### 2. Field

(1) The field refers to the surface inside the court. The field is divided into the inner field and the outer field.

(i) The inner field shall be rectangular in shape, 15m in length and 20m in width. Its outer edge shall be bounded by the inside line.

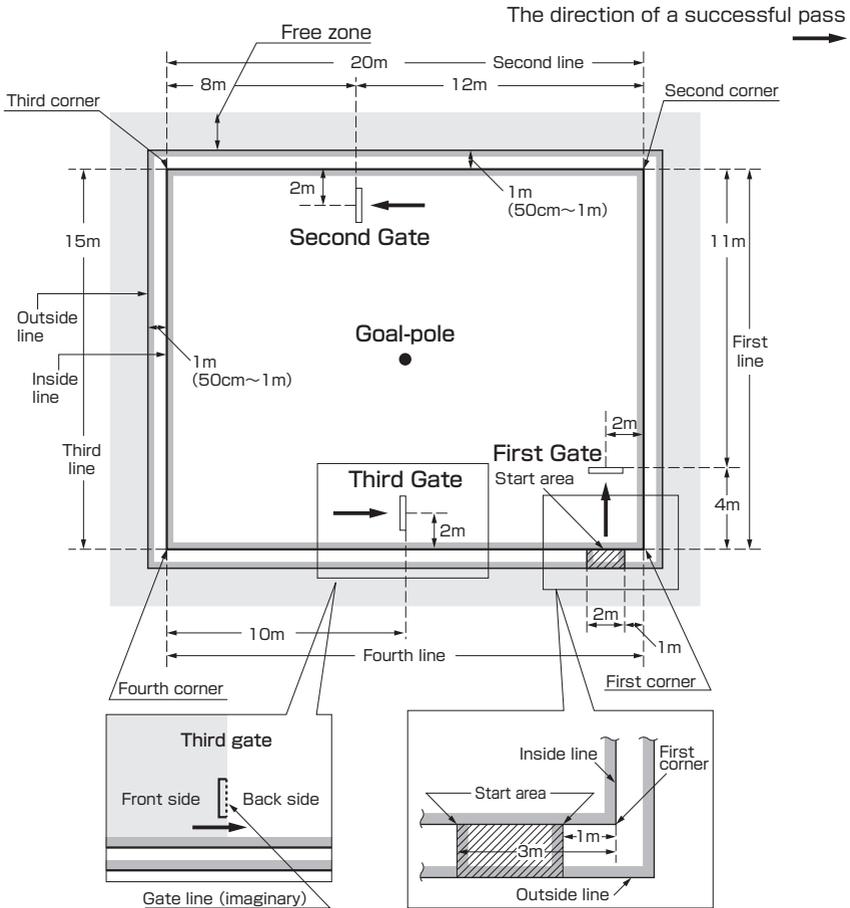
a. The width of the inside line shall be set at 5cm in principle. The color of the line shall be a color that easily contrasts with the court surface. The inside line shall be set inside the inner field along the outer edge of the inner field.

b. In an anticlockwise direction from one 15m side, each side of the inner field shall be referred to as follows: the first line, the second line, the third line, and the fourth line.

c. Each corner of the inner field shall be referred to as follows: the corner where the first and fourth lines intersect is referred to as the first corner, and, in an anticlockwise direction, is followed by the second corner, the third corner, and the fourth corner.

(ii) The outer field is a fixed area 1m in width, in principle, that lies outside the inner field. Its outer edge shall be bounded by the outside line and its inner edge shall be bounded by the inside line. The width of the outer field shall be set between 50cm and 1m.

a. The outside line should be wide enough to be clearly visible, while the color of the line should be easily identifiable on the court surface. The outside line shall be set inside the outer field along the outer edge of the outer field.



**Figure 1, The Court**

### 3. The Start Area

- (1) The start area is a rectangle created by four points - two points that are 1m and 3m from the first corner on the fourth line, and two points where two vertical lines drawn outward from the first two points intersect the outer edge of the outer field.
  - (i) The two longer sides of the start area are formed by a section of the inside line and the outside line.

(ii) The outer edges of the two shorter sides of the start area are formed by the following line:

- a. The line which forms the shorter side of the start area should be wide enough to be clearly visible, while the color of the line should be easily identifiable on the court surface. The line shall be set inside the start area along the outer edge of the start area.

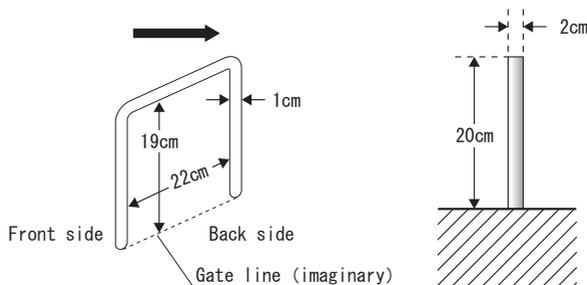
#### 4. Gate (Figures 1 and 2)

- (1) A gate shall consist of a U-shaped, 1cm (+/- 1mm) diameter cylinder rod in a color that is easily identifiable on the court.
- (2) The two legs of the gate shall be secured vertically on the ground so that the inner space between the two legs is 22cm wide and 19cm high.
- (3) The gates include the first gate, the second gate and the third gate. The position of each gate shall be as follows.
  - (i) The point exactly between both legs of the first gate is positioned at a point 2m from the inside line and at a right angle to the third line from a point 4m from the first corner, in the direction of the second corner. The gate shall be set so that the (imaginary) gate line, which passes through this center point and runs parallel to the fourth line, is in contact with the outermost edge of both legs of the gate facing the second line.
  - (ii) The point exactly between both legs of the second gate is positioned at a point 2m from the inside line and at a right angle to the fourth line from a point 12m from the second corner, in the direction of the third corner. The gate shall be set so that the (imaginary) gate line, which passes through this center point and runs parallel to the first line, is in contact with the outermost edge of both legs of the gate facing the third line.
  - (iii) The point exactly between both legs of the third gate is positioned at a point 2m from the inside line and at a right angle to the second line from the center of the fourth line. The gate shall be set so that the (imaginary) gate line, which passes through this center point and runs parallel to the third line, is in contact with the outermost edge of both legs of the gate facing the first line.

- (4) The top of each gate shall be marked by a gate number.
  - (i) Each gate number should not be greater than 10cm in both height and width.
- (5) The areas surrounding each gate shall be referred to as the front side and the back side, separated by the gate line.
  - (i) The front side of the first gate refers to the side of the gate facing the fourth line, while the back side of the first gate refers to the side of the gate facing the second line.
  - (ii) The front side of the second gate refers to the side of the gate facing the first line, while the back side of the second gate refers to the side of the gate facing the third line.
  - (iii) The front side of the third gate refers to the side of the gate facing the third line, while the back side of the third gate refers to the side of the gate facing the first line.

#### 5. Goal-pole (Figures 1 and 2)

- (1) The goal-pole shall consist of a 2cm (+/- 1mm) diameter cylinder rod in a color that is easily identifiable on the court surface.
- (2) The goal-pole shall be secured vertically at a height of 20cm above ground.
- (3) The goal-pole shall be set in the center of the court.



**Figure 2, Gate and Goal-pole**

#### Clause 2. Free Zone

1. A free zone shall be set outside the court.
  - (1) During a game, only the players, managers, referees and persons invited into the zone shall be allowed to enter.

2. A waiting area shall be set inside the free zone.
  - (1) The waiting area shall have seats (benches, chairs, etc.) for the manager and players.
3. A scoreboard shall be set within the free zone.
  - (1) The scoreboard shall be set in view of the players of both teams and spectators. Also the scoreboard shall be set so that it does not impede the game.

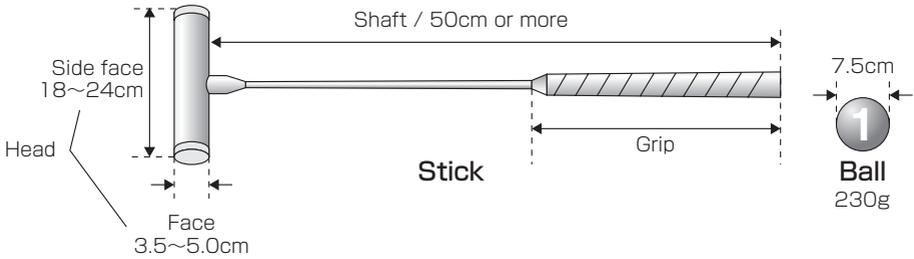
## **Article 2. Equipment**

### **Clause 1. Stick (Figure 3)**

1. The stick shall consist of a head and a shaft forming a T-shaped instrument.
  - (1) The head is cylindrical in principle, with two faces running parallel to the shaft. The side face refers to the section of the stick that intersects with the shaft at a right angle.
    - (i) The face shall be a minimum 3.5cm, and a maximum 5cm, in diameter.
    - (ii) The side face shall be 18cm to 24cm in length.
  - (2) The shaft shall be stick-shaped and secured at the midpoint of the side face.
    - (i) The shaft shall be 50cm or more in length, including the grip.

### **Clause 2. Ball (Figure 3)**

1. The ball used shall be of an even spherical shape with a diameter of 7.5cm (+/- 0.7mm) and a weight of 230g (+/- 10g), made of synthetic resin. There shall be a total of ten balls: five red balls and five white balls.
  - (1) The red balls shall be marked in white with the odd numbers '1,' '3,' '5,' '7' and '9.'
  - (2) The white balls shall be marked in red with the even numbers '2,' '4,' '6,' '8' and '10.'
  - (3) The ball number shall be 5cm in height in principle, and be visibly marked in at least two locations on the ball.



**Figure 3, Equipment**

## Chapter 2. Team

### Article 3. Team

#### Clause 1. Team Structure

1. The team shall consist of five players and up to three substitutes, among whom one shall be designated the captain.
2. Each team may have one manager (non-playing) specific to the team.

### Article 4. Manager and Players

#### Clause 1. Duties of the Manager

1. The manager shall head the team and be responsible for the actions and comments of the team.
2. The manager shall conduct the following:
  - (1) Indicate the substitution of a player (Article 6, Clause 6).
  - (2) Designate a substitute captain.
  - (3) Indicate the absence of a player (Article 6, Clause 7).
3. The manager may question the referee. The questioning, however, must be done at the time the action in question arises. The time used for such questioning will not be counted as referee time (Article 20, Clause 1).
  - (1) Once the question has been addressed by the referee, the manager may not repeat the question.

## **Clause 2. Duties of the Captain**

1. The captain shall represent the players and be responsible for the actions and comments of the team.
  - (1) When the captain is not able to perform his/her responsibilities for emergency reasons, etc., the manager shall designate a substitute captain from among the players, and indicate to the referee.
    - (i) When the manager is not present, the captain shall designate a substitute captain from among the players, and indicate to the referee.
    - (ii) When the manager is not present, and the captain is unable to designate a substitute, one of the players shall be designated and indicated from within.
2. The captain shall conduct the following:
  - (1) Submit a playing order sheet.
  - (2) Choose whether the team leads or follows, or choose the waiting area.
  - (3) Sign the record sheet at the end of the game.
3. When a manager is not present, the captain shall concurrently take on the responsibilities and duties of the manager.
  - (1) The captain may concurrently take on the responsibilities and duties of the manager while observing his/her directions even when the manager is present.

## **Clause 3. Clothing**

1. The starting players, as well as the substitute players who join the game midway to replace the starting players, shall wear the number indicating their playing order (Article 12, Clause 1).
  - (1) The number shall have a height of 10cm or more.
  - (2) The numbers should be able to be easily identified.
  - (3) The number shall be displayed in any of the following ways:
    - (i) on the chest and on the back
    - (ii) on the chest
2. The manager must wear an identification on the upper arm noting that he/she is the manager.
3. The captain must wear an identification on the upper arm noting that he/she is the captain.
4. All players on the same team must wear the same uniform.

5. The manager and players must wear athletic shoes.
  - (1) The soles of athletic shoes must not be modified in any way that would affect play.
6. The players must not have anything on their person that might impede the game.

#### **Clause 4. Basic Conditions to be Observed by the Manager and Players**

1. The manager and players shall understand and observe the Official Gateball Game Rules (hereinafter “Game Rules”).
2. Those who are involved in the game must accept the decisions of the referee in the spirit of true sportsmanship.
3. The manager and players must treat the other teams, teammates, referees and spectators in the spirit of fair play, and communicate with courtesy.
4. The manager and players must not take action aimed at influencing the decision of the referee or hide a foul made by the team.
5. The manager and players must not take action aimed at extending the game.

## **Chapter 3. Preparing for the Game**

### **Article 5. Preparing for the Game**

#### **Clause 1. Submitting the Playing Order Sheet**

1. The captain shall submit a playing order sheet to the referee before the start of the game.
  - (1) The playing order cannot be changed once the playing order sheet has been submitted.

#### **Clause 2. Deciding Who Goes First**

1. After the playing order sheets are submitted by the captains of the respective teams, the referee conducts a coin toss to decide which captain has the right to choose whether to be the leading team or the following team.
  - (1) The captain of the team that wins the right to choose whether to be the leading or the following team then chooses whether his/her team will be the leading or following team.

- (2) The captain of the team that did not win the right to choose whether to be the leading or following team then selects the waiting area.

### Clause 3. Confirmations and Inspections Before Start of the Game

1. Prior to the start of the game, the manager and players shall undergo a referee inspection confirming the following:
  - (1) Contents of the playing order sheet and the playing order.
  - (2) Equipment and clothing.

## Chapter 4. How to Play the Game

### Article 6. How to Play the Game

#### Clause 1. Formality of the Game

1. The game is played between 2 teams with 5 players on each team.
2. Once the game has started, the players play according to the playing order, with the players of the leading team and the following team playing alternately until the end of the game.

#### Clause 2. Duration of the Game

1. The duration of the game shall be 30 minutes.

#### Clause 3. Start of the Game

1. The game will start upon the chief referee calling "Play Ball."
2. At the beginning of the game, the starting players will line up in the free zone outside the fourth line, in order, from the first player to the tenth player (Figure 4).

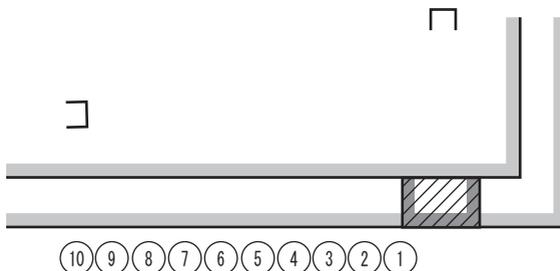


Figure 4, Placement at the start of play

#### **Clause 4. End of the Game**

1. The game will end upon the chief referee calling “Game Set.”
2. The game time shall end after 30 minutes from the start of the game. The game shall end when the following takes place:
  - (1) If the game time ends after a player from the leading team has been called to stroke and before the next player from the following team has been called to stroke, the game will end when the rights as a stroker (Article 9, Clause 1) end for the next stroker from the following team.
    - (i) If a previous play by the next stroker from the following team has resulted in an out-ball (Article 17, Clause 2), a finish (Agari) (Article 14, Clause 1), or the player is absent, the game will end when the rights as a stroker end for the stroker from the leading team.
  - (2) If the game time ends after a player from the following team has been called to stroke and before the next player from the leading team has been called to stroke, the game ends when the rights as a stroker end for the stroker from the following team.

#### **Clause 5. Playing Order and the Ball**

1. The playing order of the players is from one to ten.
2. Players shall each be given their own ball, the number of which shall correspond to the playing order number.
  - (1) The ball which corresponds to the stroker’s playing order number is referred to as the stroker’s ball.
  - (2) The nine balls other than the stroker’s ball are referred to as the other ball/s.

#### **Clause 6. Substitution of Players**

1. The substitution of players refers to when a player is replaced with a substitute.
  - (1) Once the playing order sheet has been submitted, each substitute player on the playing order sheet can only replace a player once.
    - (i) A substitute will assume the playing order of the replaced player.
    - (ii) A player who has been substituted may not rejoin that game.
    - (iii) If the fact that a substitute player has been playing without indicating the substitution was found out before the stroke or foul play of the next stroker has been made, the play shall become ineffective (Article 10, Clause 2).

- (2) The substitution shall be approved as follows:
  - (i) The manager shall indicate a substitution to the recorder.
  - (ii) The recorder confirms the substitution and advises the chief referee of the substitution.
  - (iii) The chief referee approves and announces the substitution.
- (3) The substitution will not be approved in the following cases:
  - (i) If the substitution is indicated after the player who will be substituted has stroked as a stroker but before his/her rights as a stroker have ended.
  - (ii) If the substitute player is not wearing the appropriate playing order number when the player who will be substituted is called to stroke.

### **Clause 7. Absence of Players**

1. Should a player become absent from a team during a game, the following shall apply:
  - (1) This must be immediately reported to the referee by the manager.
  - (2) The playing order of the player who has become absent will be an absent number, and the game will continue without that player.
    - (i) The ball of the absent player shall remain as is in the game.
    - (ii) Any points made by the absent player's ball through the play of the other players shall be valid.

## **Chapter 5. Winning and Losing**

### **Article 7. Deciding the Winner**

#### **Clause 1. Score and Result**

1. The score is determined by the following:
  - (1) When a successful pass is made through the first gate, one point is given.
  - (2) When a successful pass is made through the second gate, another point is given, for a total of two points.
  - (3) When a successful pass is made through the third gate, another point is given, for a total of three points.

- (4) Upon successfully finishing, another two points are given, for a total of five points.
2. At the end of the game, the points of each team's players are added, and the team with the greater total points is the winner.

### **Clause 2. Deciding the Winner When Points are Tied**

1. In the case where the two teams are tied with an equal number of points, the details of the points determine the winner, in the following order:
  - (1) The team with more players finishing becomes the winner.
  - (2) If the same number of players finished, the team with more players successfully passing through the third gate becomes the winner.
  - (3) If the same number of players finished, and the same number of players successfully passed through the third gate, the team with more players successfully passing through the second gate becomes the winner.
2. In the case where a winner cannot be determined according to 1 above, tiebreakers are used to determine the winner, in the following order:
  - (1) The players at the end of the game will line up in order from 1 to 10, and will compete in successfully passing through the first gate. The team with more successful passes becomes the winner.
    - (i) If one team mathematically clinches the win at any point, the game ends at that point.
    - (ii) Even if one or more players are absent at the end of the game, these openings cannot be filled.
  - (2) If a winner cannot be determined according to 2 (1) above, the players first and second in the playing order will compete one-on-one in attempting to successfully pass through the first gate. The team with a successful pass becomes the winner. If a winner still cannot be determined, the next two players according to playing order will compete one-on-one in attempting to successfully pass through the first gate. The process continues until a winner can be determined.
    - (i) If a stroker is absent, the other team can win simply by successfully passing through the first gate.
3. If a winner cannot be determined according to 1 above, rather than determining a winner by way of 2 above, the game may be recorded as a tie.

### **Clause 3. Perfect Game**

1. During a game, if either team reaches 25 points, the game will be recorded as a perfect game. The game ends at the following time point, and the winner shall be decided as follows:
  - (1) When the leading team achieves a perfect game as the result of a play by a stroker on the leading team, the game ends when the rights as a stroker end for the next player on the following team.
  - (2) When the following team achieves a perfect game as the result of a play by a stroker on the leading team, the game ends when the rights as a stroker end for that stroker.
  - (3) When the leading team achieves a perfect game as the result of a play by a stroker on the following team, the game ends when the rights as a stroker end for that stroker.
  - (4) When a perfect game is achieved by the following team as the result of a play by a stroker on the following team, the game ends at that moment.
2. If both teams reach 25 points, the winner shall be decided in accordance with Clause 2, 2 above, or the game shall be recorded as a tie in accordance with Clause 2,3 above.

## **Article 8. Forfeit**

### **Clause 1. Abandonment**

1. In the case where any of the following occurs, the game is abandoned.
  - (1) A team announces their intentions to abandon the game.
  - (2) A team has less than five players at the start of the game.
2. If the game is abandoned, the other team wins the game by forfeit.

### **Clause 2. Non-eligible Participation**

1. The following will be regarded as non-eligible participation:
  - (1) If anyone other than those listed in the playing order sheet plays in the game.
  - (2) If a player plays with equipment and/or a uniform that does not comply with the requirements of the inspection held before the start of the game.

- (3) If a player who was replaced by a substitute then plays again in the same game.
2. Non-eligible participation by a team will result in the other team winning the game by forfeit.

## Chapter 6. The Game

### Article 9. Play and Rights as a Stroker

#### Clause 1. Play and Rights as a Stroker

1. The stroker is the player who has been called to stroke.
  - (1) The stroker can enter the court to play.
2. The rights as a stroker begin and end as follows:
  - (1) The rights as a stroker begin when a player is called to stroke.
  - (2) The rights as a stroker end at the following time points:
    - (i) After the stroke, when the stroker has not gained the right for continuous stroke (Article 12, Clause 3) nor the right to spark (Article 15, Clause 2), and all the balls inside the inner field have stopped making valid moves.
    - (ii) When a stroker carries out a move that constitutes a foul play.
3. A stroker must stroke or spark (Article 16, Clause 1) within ten seconds after the referee starts counting ten seconds.
  - (1) The ten seconds are counted from either of the following:
    - (i) When a stroker is called to stroke next.
    - (ii) When the right for continuous stroke is gained.
    - (iii) When the right to spark is gained.
4. When the rights as a stroker end, the stroker shall promptly exit the court.

#### Clause 2. Time Over

1. It is a time-over foul if the stroker does not stroke or spark within ten seconds.
2. The following applies in the case of a time-over foul.

- (i) Any balls that move following the time-over foul shall be returned to the positions they were in before moving.
- (ii) If a time-over foul takes place during a start stroking, the stroker's ball shall be placed outside the field.
- (iii) If a time-over foul takes place during a stroker's action on sparking, Article 16, Clause 4 'Sparking Foul 2' shall apply, depending on the situation at the time.

### **Clause 3. Confirmation by the Stroker**

1. A stroker may confirm the following points with the chief referee or assistant referee. The time used for such confirmation by the stroker will not be counted as referee time.
  - (1) Regarding a successful pass through a gate.
    - (i) When the outer edge of a stationary ball is on a gate line, whether or not it will make a successful pass through the gate if it moves towards the back side of the gate to completely cross over the gate line.
    - (ii) Whether or not the outer edge of the other ball set for sparking (Article 16, Clause 1, 2) is on the gate line.
  - (2) Regarding a successful finish.
    - (i) Whether or not a ball which has successfully passed through the third gate is in contact with the goal-pole.
  - (3) Regarding a successful Touch (Article 15, Clause 1).
    - (i) Whether or not the stroker's ball is in contact with the other ball(s) before stroking.
    - (ii) Which ball the Touch was successfully made with.
  - (4) Regarding a contact situation following a successful Touch between the stroker's ball and the touched other ball(s) and a contact situation between the touched ball(s) and other ball(s).
    - (i) Whether or not there is a contact situation between the stroker's ball and touched other ball(s) after a Touch.
    - (ii) Whether or not there is a contact situation between the touched ball(s) and other ball(s) after a Touch.

## Article 10. Effective Plays and Ineffective Plays

### Clause 1. Effective Plays

1. Effective plays refer to the following:
  - (1) Proper plays
    - (i) Proper plays refer to the following plays and actions:
      - a. A proper stroking by a stroker and his/her actions taken leading up to his/her play.
      - b. A proper sparring by a stroker and his/her actions taken leading up to his/her play.
  - (2) Foul plays
    - (i) Foul plays refer to plays made by a stroker that result in a foul.

### Clause 2. Ineffective Plays

1. Ineffective plays refer to the following plays and actions:
  - (1) Plays made by a stroker during referee time.
  - (2) Actions of a person other than the stroker.

## Article 11. Movement of the Ball

### Clause 1. Valid Moves

1. Aside from invalid moves, all movements of balls as a result of a proper play by a stroker shall be valid.

### Clause 2. Invalid Moves

1. The following moves shall all be regarded as invalid moves, and balls moved shall be returned to their positions before the move:
  - (1) The movement of a ball following a foul play.
  - (2) The movement of a ball following an ineffective play.
  - (3) The movement of other ball(s) made by the ball which has not yet passed through the first gate.
  - (4) The movement of a ball in contact with a gate or the goal-pole as a result of stroking an out-ball.
  - (5) The movement of an out-ball that does not end up within the inner field.

- (6) Moving a ball that has finished, and other ball(s) moved as a result of this move.
- (7) The movement of a ball as a result of the stroker's body coming in contact with a gate or the goal-pole.
- (8) The movement of a ball as a result of a sparked other ball hitting another ball that was temporarily moved by the stroker.
- (9) The following movement of the stroker's ball or other ball during a stroker's action on sparking while the play is recognized as a proper play:
  - (i) When the stroker's ball stops in contact with another touched ball, and the stroker's ball moves as the result of the stroker picking up the touched ball as part of a stroker's action on sparking.
  - (ii) When a touched ball comes into contact with yet another ball and stops, and that other ball moves as the result of the stroker picking up the touched ball as part of a stroker's action on sparking.
  - (iii) When the stroker's ball stops in contact with several touched balls, and the stroker's ball or one of the touched balls are moved as the result of the stroker picking up another touched ball in order to temporarily move that ball.
  - (iv) When, during an action on sparking, the stroker drops a touched other ball that he/she picked up, and that ball touches a gate or goal-pole, as a result of which the stroker's ball or another ball, which is in contact with that gate or goal-pole, is indirectly moved.
  - (v) When the stroker's ball and a touched other ball stop in contact with a gate or the goal-pole and, during an action on sparking, the stroker picks up the touched other ball to indirectly move his/her ball.
  - (vi) When a touched other ball stops in contact with a gate or goal-pole with which another ball is also in contact, and the stroker picks up that touched ball during an action on sparking, resulting in the other ball in contact with the gate or goal-pole to be indirectly moved.
  - (vii) If, when resetting the balls, the stroker's ball is moved as a result of the stroker picking up the set other ball while he/she is not stepping on his/her ball.
- (10) Other than (1) through (9) above, the following moves that the referee designates as an invalid move:

- (i) When a ball has gone to the outer field, the ball hits another ball which has already been placed as an out-ball and causes this ball to move.
  - (ii) When a ball is moved indirectly by hitting soil or grass with the stick.
  - (iii) When a ball in contact with a gate or the goal-pole is moved indirectly as a result of the stick coming in contact with the gate or the goal-pole.
  - (iv) When the uniform, number or any of a stroker's belongings (including glove, cap, hat, glasses and the captain's identification) touches a ball.
  - (v) When a stationary ball moves as the result of weather conditions, or as the result of the way the gate, the goal-pole, the inside line, or the lines forming the start area have been set.
2. When a ball(s) move(s) as the result of an invalid move, that ball(s) shall be returned to its position before the move except for the ball(s) making the valid move.
- (1) If a ball making an invalid move touches a ball making a valid move, then the ball making the valid move shall remain in the position at which it stopped following that move.

## **Article 12. Stroking**

### **Clause 1. Stroking**

1. Stroking refers to the act of a stroker stroking his/her own ball with the face of the stick.
- (1) The stroker cannot refuse his/her own turn to stroke.

### **Clause 2. Start Stroking**

1. The start stroking refers to the act of a stroker placing his/her own ball which has not made a successful pass through the first gate with his/her hand in the start area and stroking it.
- (1) The stroker can use his/her hand to reposition his/her ball which has been once placed in the start area.
  - (2) A stroker may ask the referee to have a ball temporarily moved if it is obstructing the path to complete a pass through the first gate.

- (3) A player who was not able to make a successful pass through the first gate again carries out a start stroking at his/her next turn to stroke.

### **Clause 3. Gaining the Right for Continuous Stroke**

1. The right for continuous stroke is gained in the following cases where all the balls inside the inner field stop:
  - (1) When the stroker's ball makes a successful pass through a gate and stops as an in-ball (Article 17, Clause 1), the stroker can stroke his/her ball once more. The number of continuous strokes gained by making one or more successful passes through one or more gates is limited to one.
  - (2) When a Spark is made successfully, the stroker can stroke his/her ball once more. The number of continuous strokes gained by making one or more successful Sparks is limited to one.
  - (3) When a successful pass through a gate and a successful Touch are made with the same stroke, the stroker can stroke his/her ball two times more after making a successful Spark.

### **Clause 4. Stroking Foul**

1. Any of the following actions by a stroker is a stroking foul:
  - (1) Stroking by pushing (when the face of the stick pushes the stroker's ball forward while keeping the stick face in contact with the ball).
  - (2) When a ball is stroked twice (when the stick face touches the stroker's ball twice or more during the same swing).
  - (3) When the stroker's ball is stroked with a part of the stick other than the stick face.
  - (4) When the stroker kicks his/her stick to stroke his/her ball.
  - (5) When the stroker's ball is stroked by using the hand to hit the stick.
  - (6) When the stroker's ball is stroked while the hand is in contact with the head of the stick.
  - (7) After a Touch but before the right to spark is gained, when stroking the stroker's ball which remains still.
  - (8) When stroking the stroker's ball without sparking although the right to spark is gained.
  - (9) Following a successful Spark, when stroking the stroker's ball before all the balls inside the inner field come to a stop.

- (10) Following a successful Spark, when stroking the stroker's ball before all the stroker's actions on sparking are completed.
  - (11) If the stick comes into contact with another ball.
  - (12) If the stroker's stick comes into contact with his/her ball that is moving (excluding when a ball is stroked twice).
  - (13) If, during the start stroking, the stroker's ball is placed in the field but outside the start area.
2. The following shall apply in the case of a stroking foul depending on the situation at the time:
- (1) If 1 (1) to (10) of this clause applies:
    - (i) A ball that is moved as the result of a stroking foul shall be returned to the position it was in before it moved.
    - (ii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball (Article 17, Clause 2, 2-(2)) from the position it was in when it was stroked.
  - (2) If 1 (11) of this clause applies:
    - (i) A ball that is moved as the result of a stroking foul shall be returned to the position it was in before it moved.
    - (ii) The other ball that has moved as the result of a stroking foul shall be returned to the position it was in when it came into contact with the stick.
    - (iii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position it was in when it stopped.
  - (3) If 1 (12) of this clause applies:
    - (i) A ball that is moved as the result of a stroking foul shall be returned to the position it was in before it moved.
    - (ii) A stroker's ball shall become an out-ball from the position it was in when the stick came into contact with the ball.
  - (4) If 1 (13) of this clause applies:
    - (i) A ball that is moved as the result of a stroking foul shall be returned to the position it was in before it moved.
    - (ii) The stroker's ball is placed outside the field.
  - (5) If a stroking foul takes place during a stroker's action on sparking, Article 16, Clause 4 'Sparking Foul 2' shall apply, depending on the situation at the time.

## Article 13. Passing the Gate (Gate Tsuka)

### Clause 1. Successful Pass Through a Gate

1. A successful pass through a gate, or “Gate Tsuka,” takes place when the ball moves in the direction from the front side to the back side, through the first, second and third gates, in that order, to completely cross over the gate line for the first time (Figures 1 and 2).
  - (1) A pass through the first gate is successful if the stroker’s ball completely passes over the gate line of the first gate with the start stroke.
    - (i) If a pass through the first gate has not been made successfully, the stroker’s ball is removed from the field.
  - (2) The following balls have not made a successful pass through the second and third gates yet.
    - (i) A ball which moves from the back side to the front side of a gate and stops with its outer edge on the gate line.
    - (ii) A ball with its outer edge is on the gate line as a result of stroking an out-ball.
    - (iii) A ball which has been a set other ball in a Spark and which is placed in a position where its outer edge is on the gate line as the result of a sparking foul which has occurred after setting the balls but before making a successful Spark.
    - (iv) A ball which is set to spark so that its outer edge is on the gate line.
    - (v) A ball which passes through a gate as a result of stroking an out-ball.

## Article 14. Finishing (Agari)

### Clause 1. A Successful Finish

1. A successful finish, or “Agari,” occurs when an in-ball that has already successfully passed through the third gate hits the goal-pole.
  - (1) A successful finish of a touched other ball as the result of a Spark requires that this other ball is set up so that it is not in contact with the goal-pole.
  - (2) If a ball that has successfully passed the third gate is in contact with the goal-pole, the ball will be recognized as having successfully finished in the following moves:

- (i) If the stroker whose own ball is in contact with the goal-pole strokes that ball.
  - (ii) If an in-ball makes a valid move to come in contact with the ball that is in contact with the goal-pole.
2. A ball that has successfully finished shall be removed from the field.

## Article 15. Touch

### Clause 1. A Successful Touch

1. A Touch occurs when the stroker's ball that is an in-ball is stroked and moves to touch another ball.
- (1) If the stroker's ball is already in contact with another ball, a successful Touch can be made just by stroking the stroker's ball.
  - (2) If the stroker's ball touches another ball before successfully passing through the first gate, it is not regarded as a successful Touch.

### Clause 2. Gaining the Right to Spark

1. The stroker gains the right to spark when a successful Touch is made, both the stroker's ball and the touched ball stop as in-balls, and all the other balls in the inner field stop.
- (1) If the stroker gains the right to spark a number of other balls, regardless of the order the balls were touched, all other balls can be sparked.

### Clause 3. Priorities on Sparking

1. If a stroker gains both the right for continuous stroke and the right to spark, the stroker must spark first.

### Clause 4. Touching the Same Ball Twice

1. It is a "touching the same ball twice" foul if, during his/her continuous stroke, the stroker makes a Touch with a ball which he/she has already sparked.
2. Touching the same ball twice shall result in the following.
- (i) A ball that has moved as the result of being touched a second time is returned to the position it was in before it moved.
  - (ii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position it was in when it touched twice.

## Article 16. Spark

### Clause 1. Spark

1. Sparking is when, after setting the balls, the stroker moves another ball by causing impact to the his/her own ball.
  - (1) The stroker cannot refuse to spark.
2. Setting the balls refers to stepping on the stroker's own ball where the ball has stopped, and placing a touched ball inside the inner field so that it is in contact with the stroker's ball.
  - (1) While setting the balls, even if the touched other ball is not in contact with the stroker's ball and there is a space between the two balls but it is still possible to carry out a valid Spark, it shall be deemed that the balls are set.
  - (2) If the player steps on his/her ball and the touched other ball at the same time, the balls are set at the point that they were stepped on.
3. All movements made by the sparked ball are valid except for invalid moves.

### Clause 2. Stroker's Actions on Sparking

1. Stroker's actions on sparking refers to all actions after the point at which all the balls inside the inner field come to a stop following a successful Touch, to the point when the stroker steps off his/her own ball following a successful Spark. The stroker's actions on sparking are as follows:
  - (1) The order of the stroker's actions on sparking is as follows:
    - (i) The stroker picks up the touched ball and steps on his/her ball to secure it.
    - (ii) The ball is set.
    - (iii) The stroker removes his/her hand from the set other ball.
    - (iv) The stroker hits his/her ball to move the other ball.
    - (v) The stroker removes his/her foot from the his/her ball.
2. The following stroker's actions on sparking are proper plays:
  - (1) Picking up another ball that was touched after stepping on one's own ball.
  - (2) Replacing or twisting one's own foot while having stepped on the one's own ball.
  - (3) Touching one's own ball while setting.

- (4) Resetting the ball.
  - (5) The stroker strokes his/her foot at the same time he/she strokes the ball.
  - (6) The stroker's ball moves underneath his/her foot.
    - (i) When the stroker's ball moves underneath his/her foot, and if this movement affects a play such as passing a gate, finishing, or making a Touch, the referee shall place the stroker's ball back in its original position.
3. After touching a number of balls, if the stroker's ball is in contact with a number of balls that it touched, the stroker shall, in the following order, temporarily move the balls that will be sparked second and thereafter.
- (1) If touching two other balls, pick up and temporarily move the ball to be sparked second to a location that will not impede the game.
  - (2) If touching three other balls, pick up and temporarily move the balls one at a time to a location that will not impede the game. Picking up both balls at the same time is also allowed.

### **Clause 3. Completions of Sparking**

1. A successful Spark refers to the following:
  - (1) When the outer edge of the other sparked ball is 10cm or more away from the outer edge of the stroker's ball.
  - (2) When the other sparked ball successfully finishes.
  - (3) When the other sparked ball becomes an out-ball.

### **Clause 4. Sparking Foul**

1. Any of the following plays by a stroker will be regarded as a sparking foul.
  - (1) After picking up a touched ball, and before the Spark, the stroker's ball or another ball is directly moved by the touched ball.
  - (2) If the stroker's ball moves away from under the stroker's foot.
  - (3) If the stroker hits his/her ball without moving the hand from the set other ball.
  - (4) If the stroker hits only the foot.
  - (5) If, following a Spark, the outer edge of the sparked other ball stops without moving at least 10cm away from the outer edge of the stroker's ball, and the sparked other ball and the stroker's ball stop as in-balls.
  - (6) Following a successful Spark, if the other sparked ball hits a gate or the goal-pole and returns to stop in contact with the stroker's ball as an in-ball.

- (7) If, after touching several balls and picking up the first touched other ball, the order of the Spark is changed.
  - (8) If the stroker comes into contact with several touched other balls simultaneously, other than when the stroker's ball stops in contact with 3 or more touched other balls, and the balls to be sparked after the first touched ball are temporarily moved.
  - (9) If the stroker's own ball is in contact with the touched other ball and the stroker comes into contact with yet another touched other ball.
  - (10) If the stroker hits his/her ball with the touched other ball placed in the outer field.
2. The following shall apply to a sparking foul, depending on the situation at the time, except for the other successfully sparked ball:
    - (1) If a sparking foul occurs after all the in-balls have stopped moving, and before they are set.
      - (i) A ball that has moved as the result of a sparking foul is returned to the position it was in before it moved.
      - (ii) The touched other ball is returned to the position where it stopped after the Touch.
      - (iii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position where it stopped after the Touch.
    - (2) If a sparking foul takes place after the balls are set and before a successful Spark.
      - (i) A ball that has moved as the result of a sparking foul is returned to the position it was in before it moved.
      - (ii) The set other ball shall be in the position where it was when it was set.
      - (iii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position where it stopped after the Touch.
    - (3) If a sparking foul takes place after a successful Spark, and before the foot is moved away from the stroker's ball:
      - (i) A ball that has moved as the result of a sparking foul is returned to the position it was in before it moved.
      - (ii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position where it stopped after the Touch.

- (4) Following a successful Spark, if the sparked ball hits a gate or the goal-pole and returns to stop in contact with the stroker's ball as in-balls:
  - (i) The sparked ball shall be placed where it stopped in contact with the stroker's ball after the Spark.
  - (ii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position it stopped in contact with the sparked ball after the Spark.
- (5) If the stroker hits his/her ball with the touched other ball placed in the outer field.
  - (i) A ball that has moved as the result of a sparking foul is returned to the position it was in before it moved.
  - (ii) The touched other ball is returned to the position where it stopped after the Touch.
  - (iii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position where it stopped after the Touch.

## **Article 17. In-ball and Out-ball**

### **Clause 1. In-ball**

1. An in-ball refers to a ball successfully passing through the first gate, and remaining within the inner field.
2. An out-ball becomes an in-ball when it stops inside the inner field as the result of the stroker's stroke.

### **Clause 2. Out-ball**

1. An out-ball refers to the following balls which have successfully passed through the first gate and are in the outer field:
  - (1) A ball which is placed in the outer field for a proper play as follows:
    - (i) A ball which goes to the outer field after successfully passing through the first gate as a result of a start stroking.
    - (ii) A ball which goes to the outer field as a result of stroking an in-ball or by sparking.
    - (iii) A ball which goes to the outer field again as a result of stroking an out-ball.
    - (iv) A ball which does not go into the inner field by stroking an out-ball.
  - (2) A ball which is placed in the outer field for a foul.

2. An out-ball shall be positioned as follows:
  - (1) An out-ball resulting from a proper play shall be positioned as follows:
    - (i) In the case of 1. (1) (i) (ii) or (iii) of this clause, the ball shall be placed at the point created by drawing a vertical line from the point where the ball passed the inside line towards the outer field, with the outer edge of the stroker's ball 10cm away from the inside line.
    - (ii) In the case of 1. (1) (iv) of this clause, the ball shall be placed where it was before it moved.
  - (2) An out-ball resulting from a foul shall be positioned, according to the rule related to the foul, at the point beyond the inside line closest to where the foul took place or where the stroker's ball stopped, with the outer edge of the stroker's ball 10cm away from the inside line towards the outside line.
3. A stroker may ask the referee to temporarily remove an out-ball if the stroker feels the ball will obstruct play.

### **Clause 3. Stroking an Out-ball**

1. An out-ball shall be stroked from the designated position it has been placed.

### **Clause 4. Out-ball Stroking Foul**

1. If the stroker strokes an out-ball, and it hits a ball on the field other than a ball which has made an invalid move, it will be regarded as an out-ball stroking foul.
2. The following shall apply in the case of an out-ball stroking foul.
  - (i) A ball that has moved as the result of an out-ball foul is returned to the position it was in before it moved.
  - (ii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position where the out-ball stroking foul took place.

## **Article 18. Ball Touch Foul**

### **Clause 1. Ball Touch Foul**

1. Should a stroker touch a ball placed within the field for any other reason than permitted by the Game Rules, it shall be regarded as a ball touch foul.

2. The following applies in the case of a ball touch foul, depending on the situation at the time:
  - (1) If the stroker touches a ball other than his/her ball:
    - (i) A ball that has moved as the result of a ball touch foul shall be returned to the position it was in before it moved.
    - (ii) The other ball involved in the ball touch foul shall be returned to the position it was in when touched.
    - (iii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position it stopped in.
  - (2) If the stroker touches his/her own ball:
    - (i) A ball that has moved as the result of a ball touch foul shall be returned to the position it was in before it moved.
    - (ii) The stroker's ball becomes an out-ball from the position it was in when touched.
  - (3) If a ball touch foul occurs during the stroker's actions on sparking, the process outlined in Article 16, Clause 4 'Sparking Foul 2' on sparking foul shall be followed, depending on the situation at the time.

## **Article 19. Play Interference**

### **Clause 1. Play Interference**

1. The following will be regarded as play interference:
  - (1) When a manager or player does not comply with the essential rules governing the manager and player as prescribed in Article 4, Clause 4, and, even though the referee gives warnings, a member of the same team does not follow the instructions of the referee.
  - (2) When the referee determines that a manager or player is interfering with the game.
2. When play interference occurs, the following steps will be taken, depending on the situation at the time, to ensure the interference does not benefit the team which has committed the play interference:
  - (1) Take away the rights as a stroker from the stroker.
  - (2) Relevant ball(s) becomes an out-ball.
  - (3) Disallow successful passes through gates and finishes.

- (4) Eject a manager or player from the game.
  - (i) The ball of a player who has been ejected will be removed from the court.
  - (ii) The number of the player who has been ejected will be an absent number.
  - (iii) Points of the player who has been ejected obtained prior to the ejection shall be valid.
- (5) Declare the team disqualified.

## **Article 20. Referee Time**

### **Clause 1. Referee Time**

1. Referee time refers to the time required, during the game, for the action that has been approved by the referee.
2. Referee time is not included in the 10 second count, but included in the game time.

## **Article 21. Exchange of Equipment**

### **Clause 1. Exchanging the Stick**

1. A stroker may exchange the stick upon informing the referee.
  - (1) A stroker may only bring one stick into the field.
  - (2) The sticks that can be exchanged are limited to sticks that have already been inspected before starting the game.

### **Clause 2. Exchanging the Ball**

1. If any defect is found in a ball, the referee shall swiftly exchange it.

## Article 22. Interruption of the Game

### Clause 1. Interruption of the Game

1. If the game cannot continue because of a sudden change in the weather or an emergency, the game shall be temporarily interrupted.
  - (1) When the game is interrupted, balls shall be left as they are.
2. After the game is interrupted, the following shall apply, depending on the situation at the time:
  - (1) When it becomes possible to play the game, it shall continue from where the game was when it was interrupted.
  - (2) If a game is interrupted before 20 minutes has passed since the game commenced and it is impossible to continue to play the game, this shall result in the game being postponed, and that game is played once again, from the beginning.
  - (3) If a game is interrupted after 20 minutes has passed since the game commenced and it is impossible to continue to play the game, the game shall end as a called game, and the points at the time of the interruption of the game shall be effective.

## Chapter 7. Referees

## Article 23. Referees

### Clause 1. Referees

1. The referees comprise the following:
  - (1) One chief referee
  - (2) One assistant referee
  - (3) One recorder
  - (4) A linesman, should it be deemed necessary

### Clause 2. Rights of the Chief Referee

1. The chief referee shall lead the game in accordance to the Game Rules.
2. The chief referee shall have the right to make decisions to problems arising during the game that are not included in the Game Rules.

### **Clause 3. Duties of the Chief Referee**

1. Toss the coin and confirm the leading and following teams.
2. Announce “Play Ball” and “Game Set.”
3. Announce the playing order.
4. Approve and announce any player substitution.
5. Announce “Time” when a game is interrupted, as well as announce the restart of the game.
6. Implement appropriate measures against play interference.
7. Disqualify the game.
8. Confirm the record game results following the game.
9. Decide the winner (receive signatures from the captains of the both teams).

### **Clause 4. Duties of the Chief Referee and Assistant Referee**

1. Inspect the ground.
2. Confirm the details on the playing order form and playing order.
3. Inspect the equipment and uniforms.
4. Decide and announce successful passes through gates and successful finishes.
5. Decide and announce successful Touches.
6. Decide and announce out-balls. Place the balls in an appropriate position.
7. Decide and announce fouls. Implement appropriate measures.
8. Give warnings to a manager or player who does not comply with the essential rules governing the manager and players.
9. Respond to questions on the game.
10. Respond to confirmations by a stroker.
11. Temporarily move balls.
12. Respond to invalid movements of a ball.
13. Determine play interference.

### **Clause 5. Duties of the Assistant Referee**

1. Jointly assume the duties stated above with the chief referee.
2. Assist the chief referee, and, should the chief referee be unable to continue his/her responsibilities, take on the responsibilities of the chief referee.

**Clause 6. Duties of the Recorder**

1. Inspect the ground.
2. Record the necessary items on the record sheet.
3. Confirm and then call out successful passes through gates and successful finishes.
4. Provide answers to items that the chief referee or assistant referee may need to confirm.
5. Assist and advise the chief referee and assistant referee in their decisions, announcement, and implementation of measures.
6. Confirm a player substitute and advise the chief referee.
7. Keep time during the game.
8. Announce the time segments during a game (15 minutes left, 10 minutes left, 5 minutes left, time up).
9. Decide and announce out-balls. Place the balls in an appropriate position.
10. Give warnings to a manager or player who does not comply with the essential rules governing the manager and players.

**Clause 7. Duties of the Linesman**

1. Inspect the ground.
2. Assist and advise the chief referee and assistant referee in their decisions, announcement, and implementation of measures.
3. Decide and announce out-balls. Place the balls in an appropriate position.
4. Give warnings to a manager or player who does not comply with the essential rules governing the manager and players.