



Introduction

Goalball (sound ball) is a team game, practiced by blind and visually impaired people. Goalball was invented and created in 1946 by Austrian Hans Lorenzen and German Sepp Reindle as a result of efforts to improve the rehabilitation of visually impaired World War II veterans. Goalball is used for inclusive activities, including sighted people in the game.

Goalball was officially included within the Paralympic Games program permanently in 1980. It has now become a very popular sport, practiced in more than 100 countries around the world. National tournaments, international tournaments, European and World Championships are held every year.

Integration values

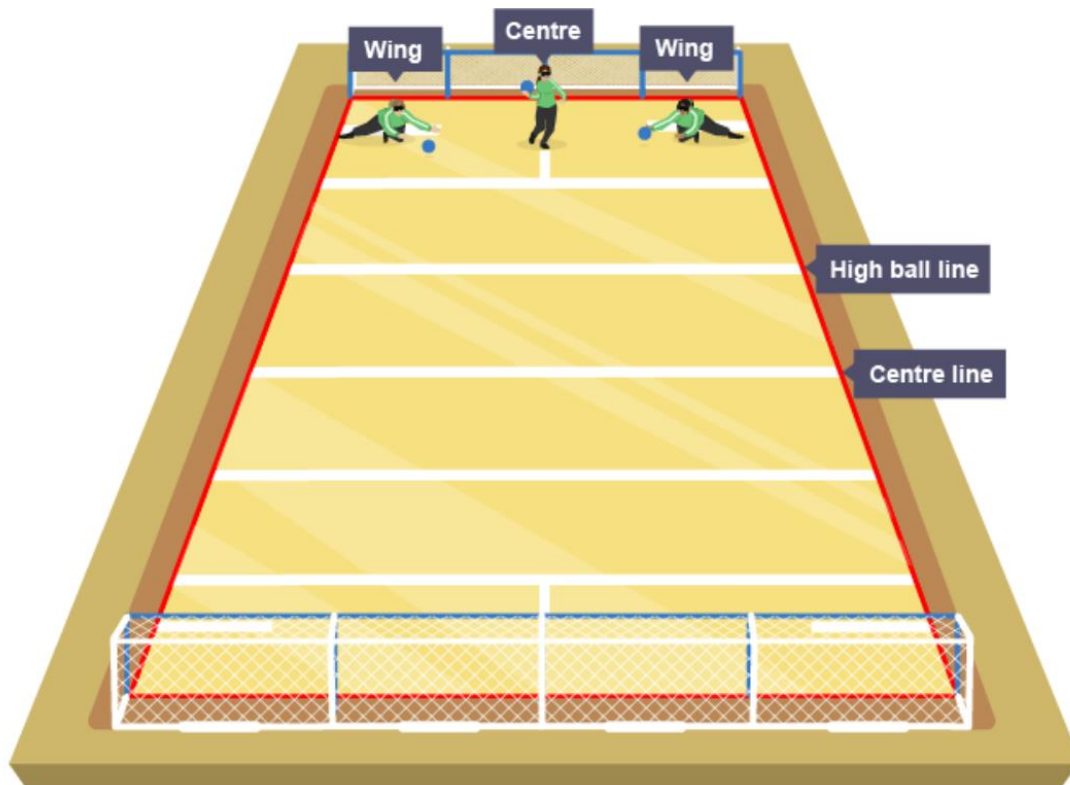
At the domestic level, Goalball can be also an inclusive game - in addition to blind and visually impaired players, sighted players can also play it. The condition is that they wear opaque eyeshades. The integrative dimension of Goalball is expressed not only by practicing this sport together, but also a better understanding of disability by able-bodied.

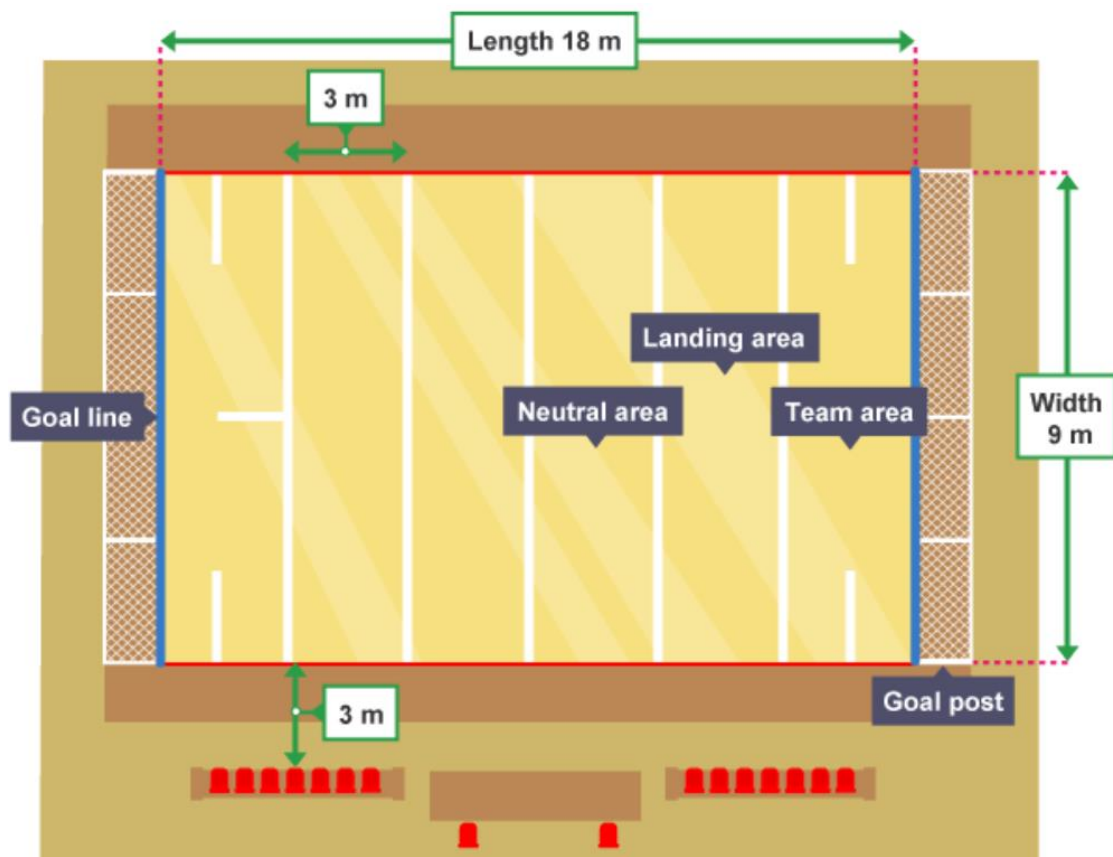
The basic premise

The aim of the game is to throw the ball into the opponent's goal, while opponents try to block the ball with their own bodies. In the middle of the ball there are bells, which inform disabled athletes where the ball is and how they should position themselves to successfully block the ball's path to the goal.

Court and equipment

The game is played on an indoor court 18 m long and 9 m wide, divided into two halves. Each half consists of three 3 m areas: orientation, landing and neutral. The goal is set along the shorter line of the court across its width (9 m). It is 1.30 m high. The markings on the court are lined with taped string helping players orient themselves.





Ball

Goalballs are 1.25 kg and 25 cm in diameter. They have 4 holes and contain bells allowing players to hear the ball when it moves.

The ball should be rolled on the floor. During the throw, it can dribble, but it must touch the throwing area of both the playing and defending team. There must be absolute silence on the court during play. The best players can throw the ball at speeds of up to 80 km/h. The defending team then has a fraction of a second to locate it and defend the throw, relying only on hearing.



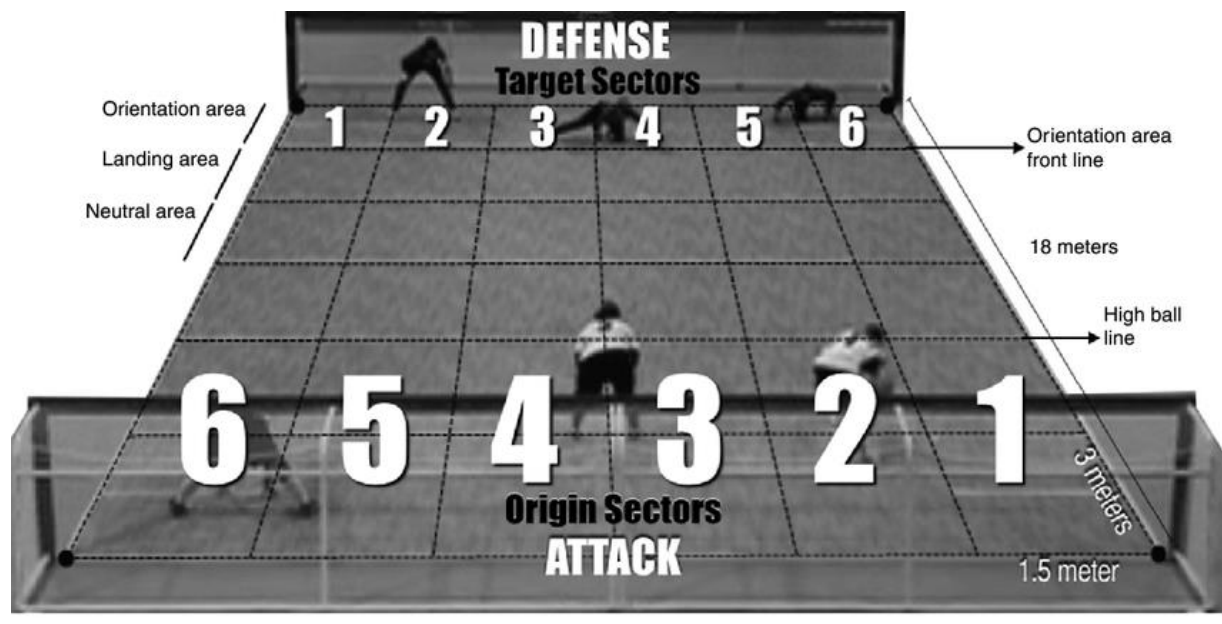
Eyeshades

Goalball players wear opaque eyeshades with eye patches underneath to ensure fair competition for blind and visually impaired players during the game. Referees have the right during the game to control the tightness of the players' patches and eyeshades, if the players touch their eyeshades during the game.



Goalball rules

The game involves six players in each team (three players and three substitutes). Goalball games are played in two categories - male and female, and also in mixed teams. The latter option is for an inclusive game.





Length of the game is 24 minutes divided into 2 halves. In the case of a tied score, additional two 3-minute halves are added. If also in this case the game is not resolved, extra throws decide the winner.

During the game, the coach is not allowed to communicate with the players or enter the field of play, but can do so during the break (each team is allowed 4 time-outs of 45 seconds during the game). Each team can make 4 substitutions during the game. The goal of the game is to score as many goals as possible.

All lines on the court are covered with tape and have string running underneath to facilitate movement and orientation on the field. Players who are in contact with the court surface almost all the time are touching the floor.

There are three players from each team on the field: a centre player and two wing players. The task of the centre player is to coordinate the entire team, is also responsible for locating the ball when the opposing team throws. The earlier she/he does this, the greater the chance of successful defence is. The centre player informs the wings of the ball's location so as not to leave gaps within the team area.

The goal is 9 meters wide, so complete coverage by three players is impossible, but if, for example, the ball flies from the left side, the right defender does not have to guard his post perfectly.

Before throwing the ball, the defensive team assumes a defensive position, usually staying on their hands and knees. During the defence, the player should assume a lying position on one side, with arms and legs tightened. At least one part of the body must touch the defence area, otherwise a penalty throw is dictated for the defending team. The whole body should be in one

line. The head should be hidden behind the hands, what eliminates its injury after contact with the rushing ball.

A goal is awarded when it was scored from a valid throw and the ball has passed the goal line with its entire circumference. A penalty throw may be dictated for an illegal defence, an incorrect throw or as a 10-second penalty (after the team has made contact with the ball, it must throw it within 10 seconds).



The effectiveness of the throws depends on their accuracy, strength, the way they were thrown, as well as the element of surprise. Most often, the roles of the main throwers are played by the wing players, while the centre player focuses on coordinating the defence. Balls thrown strongly, but also in the right place, have the greatest chance of falling into the goal.

As a rule, the weakest points of the defence block are the posts and joints, i.e. places where two defence players meet with their hands or feet. Gaps in the block occur in these places. The throwing technique itself depends on the preferences of the player himself. Balls can be of a jumping nature (however, they must touch the throwing area once and the neutral area once, according to the rules). Such a ball, if strong enough, can jump over the block.



Infractions and penalty throws

In the case of a violation of the rules of the game or a tie after a 6-minute overtime, the penalty throws are dictated. Then the goals are defended by only one player of the defending team. Infractions in goalball primarily include:

- exceeding the act of throwing by more than 10 seconds,
- detachment of the whole body from the court surface during defence,
- intentional touching eyeshades and eye patches during the game,
- arguments, cursing and noise during the match,
- lack of contact of the ball with the areas on the court during the throw.

Officials

Each game has:

- minimum of one game referee,
- 4 goal judges,
- table referees.

The head referee decides on the start and the end of the game, suspension and resumption of game and announces the goal. Table referees measure playing time, the contact time with the ball, which should not exceed 10 seconds. They also control the number of throws made by the players. Goal judges signal the scoring of a goal.



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Classification

Athletes in the **Paralympic goalball competition** are legally blind or with acute vision impairments who, on the basis of medical examinations, received the appropriate sports group, qualifying them to participate in the competition. There are 3 sport classes: B1 (complete blindness), B2 and B3 (vision impairments).



“Dis+Abled SPORT” - sports and games designed to be played by people with physical & visual disabilities alongside with able-bodied; an innovative approach to increase Social Inclusion and Equal Opportunities in Sport.



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