

EDF Q&A to clarify rules and standardize refereeing

Moving forward, the EDF will stop having a separate ruleset from the WDBF for cloth dodgeball and will adopt the 2026 version of the WDBF rules for its future championships.

The present Q&A document provides the official EDF interpretation and clarification (and adaptation) of these rules that should be followed by all its referees. The EDF recommends their members to adopt this document as the official interpretation of the WDBF rules document.

This document is meant to be read alongside the [WDBF 2026 rules document](#). The following colour code helps understanding how the written rules are impacted by this document:

- **White:** answer is the EDF official interpretation of a written rule.
- **Yellow:** answer solves an issue that was inherent to the way a rule was written.
- **Orange:** answer slightly twists the written rule for the sake of fairness and/or practicality.
- **Red:** answer supersedes the written WDBF rule to protect the EDF style of play.
- **Blue:** answer adapts the written rule for mixed teams matches.

Questions and Answers

Dead Object - Is a live player jumping out of bounds and still in the air a dead object?

A live player is not a dead object until they make contact with any surface, person or object out of bounds.

Out Player - Is a player joining the queue after serving a yellow card penalty also an out player? Is it the same for a player joining the queue to substitute an injured player?

Yes, once they have joined the queue they are also considered an out player.

Possession - Is “stationary” meant to be strictly applied or does a slowly moving ball also count for this definition?

A slowly moving ball (moving at an average person’s walking speed or slower) may be considered as “stationary” by the officials for the purpose of this definition, as long as its movement would not lead it to go to the neutral zone, or across the center line if out of bounds.

Possession - Is a ball in the hands of a player classed as being in their possession and in possession of their team as well?

Yes, a ball in the hands of a player is in their possession, and a ball in possession of a player is also in the possession of their team.

Control - What does “held” imply in this definition?

A ball is “held” by a player if and only if it is immobilized (relative to the player) and they have at least one hand on it.

Rule 1 - If barriers or netting are used, is a minimum height of 3m for the back-ends of the playing area and 2m for the sides recommended as per the diagrams?

Yes, it is the recommended minimum height for all competitions, and a mandatory minimum height for official WDBF events.

Rules 1.4.3 to 1.4.5 - Are the queue, penalty and substitution areas mandatory?

The queue and penalty areas are always mandatory. The substitution area is mandatory for WDBF events, and in its absence non-active players may wait outside of the playing area.

Rule 2.5 - Is there a penalty if a team member replaces a ball or inflates/deflates a ball during a match without the approval of an official?

Yes, inflating/deflating a ball during the match without approval may be penalized by a team yellow card. This also applies if performed before the match in order to delay the start of the match. However, replacing a ball during a match by accident should never be penalized.

Rule 4.1 - When filling out a team roster, can a team list the names of players who are not present at the start of the match? And can the roster be edited after the start of the match?

A team's roster may include the names of players who are absent at the start of the match and they will be allowed to join the substitution area when they arrive (after letting the officials check any personal equipment). However, a team's roster cannot be edited after the start of the match.

Rule 4.2 - Contrary to this rule, can a team play with fewer than 6 active players (because of injuries or just because they want to)? If yes, how does it impact the meaning of "ready" for a team to start a set?

Yes, a team may start with fewer than 6 active players. To do so, the captain or a team leader must inform the officials of how many active players there will be before they call "Line up". A team which is forced to start a set with fewer than 6 active players because of absences, injuries and/or a red card is not obligated to inform the officials.

Rule 4.2 - What should be done if a team (accidentally) starts a set with fewer than 6 active players (or fewer than the number of active players they should have)?

If a team has fewer active players ready to start the set than how many they should have, the team is not considered ready to start the set (possible delay of game). If the set accidentally starts nevertheless, the officials should immediately instruct the offending team to add players to the queue in order to have enough active players. Should they not follow this instruction, the team should receive a yellow card.

Rule 4.2 - What is the penalty for starting a set with more than 6 active players (or more than 5 active players if they received a red card)?

If a team has more active players ready to start the set than how many they should have, the team is not considered ready to start the set (possible delay of game). If the set accidentally starts nevertheless, the team should immediately receive a yellow card.

Rule 4.2 - How is this rule impacted in a mixed gender match?

In a mixed gender match, "6 active players" is replaced by "3 active players of each gender". A team may start a set with fewer than 3 active players for each gender separately by informing the officials accordingly before they call "Line up".

Rule 4.2 - Can active players be in the free space around the court, contrary to what is stated in this rule, when they are an exiting or entering player?

Yes as they are making their way to the queue area or to the court.

Rule 4.3 - Does this rule also apply to non-active players who are designated as ball retrievers?

No.

Rule 4.3 - Should there be warning/penalties if a non-active player leaves their designated area?

Not if they are leaving/entering the playing area without interfering with play, with balls or with officials. Otherwise, a warning and then possibly a blue card may be issued if they remain outside of their designated area. A penalty should be issued directly if they make an interference while outside of their designated area (blue/yellow card depending on impact).

Rule 4.4 - What is the penalty for having more than 3 ball retrievers at the start of a set? And does this limit also apply during the set (contrary to the wording of the rule)?

The limitation applies both at the start of the set and during the set. Should a team have more than 3 retrievers active in a set, a warning may be given first but the penalty must be a team yellow card otherwise.

Rule 4.6 - What is the penalty for a retriever going beyond the center line?

This should be handled as per rules 31.10 and 31.11.

Rule 4.7 - Should there be warning/penalties if retrievers leave the playing area during a set without the purpose of retrieving a ball?

Retrievers leaving the playing area without justification for an extended period of time should be warned upon their return and the officials may force their team to replace them upon repetition.

Rule 5.1 - How should the situation of a team appearing to have more than 2 team leaders be handled? What if this situation appears after the start of the match?

Before the start of the match, the team should be warned about the situation and must resolve it before the scheduled start time of the match. If the situation is not resolved when the match starts, the team will immediately receive a team yellow card.

If the situation was not present before the match and appears during the match, the team should be warned about the situation immediately after the end of the current set and must resolve it before the start of the next set. If the situation is not resolved when the next set starts, the team will immediately receive a team yellow card.

In both cases, should the situation not be resolved promptly by the team after the team yellow card, a second team yellow card (which becomes a red card) should be issued.

Rule 5.2 - Should there be warning/penalties if a team leader leaves their designated area?

Not if they are leaving/entering the playing area without interfering with play, with balls or with officials. Otherwise, a warning and then possibly a team yellow card may be issued if they remain outside of their designated area. A team yellow card should be issued directly if they make an interference while outside of their designated area.

Rule 5.3 - What is the penalty for a team leader entering the court during a set?

If done while play is suspended, a warning first, then a team yellow card on repetition.

If done during play, a team yellow card (unless they are both requesting a challenge and not interfering with play).

Rule 5.3 - Can a team leader exit their designated area and enter the court between sets and during the half-time break as implicitly allowed by this rule but barred by rule 5.2?

Yes.

Rule 5.4 - Are players who are designated as team leaders also treated as such between sets?

Yes, as long as they are wearing something that clearly identifies them as team leader and prevents mistaking them for a regular player.

Rules 6.1 and 6.2 - What are the possible consequences if a player is not wearing a valid uniform?

If a player who is not wearing a valid team uniform becomes an active player during a set, they will be sent out of the playing area to rectify their uniform and their team will finish the set with one fewer active player.

Rule 6.1 - Can players in a team wear a mix of shorts, pants and/or leggings?

Yes.

Rule 6.1 - What are the consequences if two players of a team have the same number?

Before the match, the team will be requested to keep only one player with this number while the other one will be sent out of the playing area to rectify their uniform. As long as two players having the same number in a team are within the playing area, none of them are eligible to start a set as an active player.

Rules 6.3 - What can be used to make the team captain clearly identifiable? What are the consequences if a captain is not clearly identifiable?

A team captain who is not clearly identifiable by either a mark on their uniform or an armband will lose all the prerogatives of a captain during the match (addressing the officials and requesting timeouts or challenges).

Rules 6.5 - What are the consequences if a team leader is not clearly identifiable and can be mistaken for a regular player?

A team leader who is not clearly identifiable will lose all the prerogatives of a team leader during the match (addressing the officials and requesting timeouts or challenges). This also applies to players designated as team leaders while they are not an active player.

Rule 7 - If the official does not notice a piece of illegal equipment before the game (or if a player starts using it during the game), what are the possible penalties? Does it depend on the specific piece of equipment?

If the piece of equipment or substance is judged to give the player an advantage, a penalty will be given for cheating (yellow card if discovered before usage in play, red otherwise). Otherwise, the player will be invited to immediately remove it. If they cannot do it promptly, they will be sent out of the playing area to remove it and, if they were an active player, their team will finish the set with one fewer active player.

If the equipment is judged as dangerous and inflicted pain or an injury during a contact with an opponent, a penalty must be given for the contact (with a minimum of a yellow card).

Rule 7 - What is the penalty if an active player wears, on court, an equipment that was already barred by an official?

If the equipment or substance was judged to be dangerous or to give the player an advantage, a red card penalty will be given. Otherwise, a yellow card penalty will be given.

Rule 7.2.2 - Are players required to show their casts and prostheses to the officials before the match?

Yes.

Rule 7.4.1 - Is there a list of definitely safe and definitely dangerous types of jewellery? Or maybe some objective criteria verifiable by an official to judge jewellery as safe or unsafe?

The following are generally considered dangerous jewelry:

- Any finger rings beside simple plain smooth rings without stones or asperity
- Watches and metallic or hard plastic bracelets which are not medically required
- Necklaces and chains except religious medals tucked and taped under the uniform
- Hoop earrings, dangling earrings and any large facial rings
- Lips and eyebrow piercings as well as pointy facial piercings

Rule 9.2.2 - If a normal set starts with less than 3 minutes left on the match clock, is the maximum duration of such a set reduced to the remaining duration of the match half?

Yes.

Rule 9.2.3 - Does the set (and thus the set clock) start with the beginning of the procedure to start play or with the whistle blow at its end?

The set (and thus the set clock) starts with the whistle blow.

Rule 9.2.4 - How should events happening between the end of the duration of a set and the actual signal marking the end of the set be treated? What if the delay between the two is very long?

All events (eliminations, catches, cardable offences) happening before the signal for the end of the set are considered normally part of the set. However if the delay between the end of the set time and the whistle is longer than 5s, this is ground for a challenge that the officials will try to resolve to the best of their abilities.

Rule 9.2.5 - What is the definition of “ready” in this context (using objective criteria verifiable by an official)? Is this in relation to rule 13.1?

A team is “ready” to start a set if they have the right number of active players in place as stated in rule 13.1. A team having too many or not enough players (unless because of injuries or after informing the officials) conforming to rule 13.1 when the officials call “Team ready” is not considered ready.

Rule 9.2.5 - Should the official start the procedure to start play at the end of the 30 seconds or should they start earlier in order to whistle at the 30 seconds mark? Then how should the official handle the situation where a team is not ready when they call “team ready” in regard to rule 9.2.5 and in regard to the match and set clocks?

The officials should initiate the procedure with the goal of whistling the start of the set on the 30 seconds mark. However, should a team not be ready when the officials call “Team ready”, the officials should suspend the match on the 30 seconds mark and deliver a warning or a penalty to the team.

Rule 9.2.5 - How many warnings can the official give to a team for this before having to give a team yellow card? Does it depend on whether it is advantageous for the team to waste time? And can the official wait longer than the 30s for a team to be ready?

The officials should wait no longer than 30s between sets to allow teams to get ready but they may allow a few extra seconds when starting the first set in a half or after a timeout. The first offence will be given a warning, the second will be given a team yellow card, the third will be given a final warning, and the fourth a second team yellow card.

Rule 9.3.1 - Should the penalty for not being “lined up for the opening rush” at the scheduled start of a half be handled similarly to rule 9.2.5?

Yes, it is treated as a possible delay of game. However the officials are invited to call “Line up” earlier than they would between sets in order for teams to have more time to get ready.

Rule 9.8 - How should a team request a timeout in practice?

A team leader or a captain may grab the attention of the head referees then signal a T with their hands or arms and/or call “Timeout”.

Rule 9.8 - After the end of a timeout, does the remainder of the 30 seconds between sets resume or does the match clock resume with the start of the next set?

At the end of the timeout, the remainder of the 30 seconds between sets do not resume. Instead, the match clock will resume with the start of the next set.

Rule 9.8.1 - If a team requests a 2nd timeout in a half, should this simply be ignored, or should this lead to a penalty? What if the timeout was mistakenly granted?

The second request in each half will be replied to with a warning. Any subsequent request in the half may be penalized by a team yellow card.

If a timeout is mistakenly granted, the officials will end it immediately with a whistle and a call to “Line up” then they will adjust the match clock as if 30 seconds had passed since the last set and finally they will give a warning or a yellow card to the offending team.

Rule 9.8.3 - If someone other than a team leader requests a timeout can a simple explanation that a team leader must request it suffice, or should this lead to a warning/penalty? What if it is the team’s captain who makes the request?

If anyone beside a team leader or the team captain requests a timeout, the request will not be granted and they will be informed of who may make such request. Moreover, any request for a timeout after “Line up” is called will simply be ignored.

Rule 9.8.3 - Since the “Line up” call impacts the window to request a timeout, how early or how late can/should the official call it?

In order to give sufficient time to teams to get ready, the officials should call “Line up” when there are around 5 seconds left before whistling for the start of the set.

Rule 9.9 - Is it right that all eliminations and catches happening after the whistle indicating the suspension of play (as per 45.3) are void, regardless of when a ball was thrown?

Yes, all eliminations and catches happening after the whistle for a suspension of play are void. However officials must avoid suspending play if there is action on the court. If a ball was thrown right before (or after) the whistle, officials may return it to the thrower.

Rule 9.9.3 - Should there be warning/penalties if participants leave their currently designated area during a suspension of play? And can participants request to leave their area?

Live players may be allowed to leave the court upon request to an official. Otherwise they will be warned or issued a blue card if they persist.

Non-live players who are on court will be warned or issued a blue card if they persist.

Team leaders who are on court while not being invited by an official will be warned or issued a team yellow card if they persist or do it repeatedly.

Rule 9.10.1 - What should the officials do if some players do not have a foot on the back line to resume the game after a suspension of play?

The officials should remind the players by calling "Backline", then warn them of a delay of game if they are still not taking their position and finally issue a team yellow card if they persist. (Players should not be penalized for not having their foot exactly on the line when the game resumes if they are close enough from it and as long as they do not eliminate an opponent by crossing the attack line first, in which case they should be issued a blue card.)

Rules 10.2.1 (2) & 10.3.1 - Does an exiting player who has been allowed to return to play for a catch but still must proceed to the queue area count for the purpose of these rules?

Yes.

Rule 11.3 - For the application of this rule, is the match clock started, thus effectively reducing the duration of the first half by up to 3 minutes?

Yes.

Rule 11.3 - Does this rule also apply if a team is late due to delays in the event schedule?

No, in that case the officials should be informed by the event organizers and the delayed team(s) should not be penalized.

Rule 11.3 - Should "ready" here be understood as "ready" in rule 9.2.5?

Yes, "ready" is defined using rule 13.1 where "all active players" is limited to the number of available (present and uninjured) or announced (by informing the officials) players.

Rule 11.3 - What should officials do if both teams fail to appear before the scheduled start time?

The officials will start the match clock on the scheduled time. When the first team appears and is ready, the officials will then start applying rule 11.3 normally. Should no team appear after the duration of the first half, the match is drawn.

Rule 13.1 - Can the foot inside the boundary line float above the court or must it be in contact with it? And if in contact with the court, can it also be partly above a boundary line?

The foot inside the boundary must be in contact with the court and must be entirely contained within the court boundaries.

Rule 13.1 - What happens to players not conforming with this rule when the play of the set begins? (e.g. because their foot inside the court boundary moved before the whistle)

If the foot on the backline lost contact with it, they are committing a false start.

If the foot inside the boundary is no longer entirely inside (regardless of if it is in contact with the court or not), they are deemed out and eliminated before any possible false start.

Rule 13.2 - Can officials call "Team Ready" only once for both teams or must it be twice, once for each team?

The Officials must call "Teams Ready" only once. This resolves possible unfairness issues and simplifies the starting procedure.

Rule 13.4 - Is the consequence for not complying with this simply an elimination?

Yes, they are then considered out of bounds and deemed out immediately.

Rule 13.5 - What is the consequence for touching a ball designated for the other team before being allowed to by rule 13.11.2?

Players touching the ball(s) designated for the other team (and that are on the center line) before all their designated balls have been activated will be immediately deemed out and the impacted ball(s) will be returned to the other team.

Rules 17.7 & 13.10 - What if a player retrieves a designated ball by stepping on or over the center line and then proceeds to retrieve the center ball?

They must establish contact with both feet on their side of the court before touching the center ball or they will be immediately deemed out upon touching the center ball and the ball will be given to the other team.

Rule 13.8 - Does "head first" apply to both sliding and diving?

It applies to both sliding and diving. But any sliding or diving considered to have been dangerous (e.g. crossed the center line or contacted an opponent while doing so) will warrant a yellow card, or a red card if particularly egregious.

Rule 13.9 - Can a player violently hitting the hand of the other one when retrieving the ball be considered "incidental"?

No, in this case a warning should be given for the first occurrence and a yellow card should be issued for any subsequent occurrence by the same player. If the first occurrence is particularly violent an immediate yellow card may still be issued immediately.

Rule 13.10 - What is the consequence if a player steps on or over the middle line before one of these conditions is fulfilled?

The player is immediately deemed out.

Rule 13.11.1 - Can a thrown ball that was not activated disarm a player?

No, it cannot eliminate a player by disarming them.

Rule 13.11.1 - Is a thrown ball that was not activated a live or a dead ball? And if it is a live ball, does it become a block attack if blocked (and can now hit out and disarm players)?

A ball thrown before it is activated is a dead ball that can however be validly caught by the opponent (eliminating the thrower and returning an eliminated player to play). Since it is a dead ball, blocking it is not considered a "block attack" and the ball would remain dead.

Rule 14.1 - If a player loses contact with the back line after "Team Ready" has been called but re-establishes it before the whistle blow, is it also considered a false start? And if yes, does it mean that a false start can technically be called before the starting whistle?

Any loss of contact with the back line after "Team Ready" and before the whistle blow will be considered as a false start, regardless of the player's efforts to reestablish contact. The officials may call a false start even before the starting whistle if they can.

Rule 14.6 - Is the set clock reset for a simultaneous false start?

Yes.

Rule 15.1 - Does this include other pieces of "equipment" worn by the player such as a cast or a prosthesis, or a hand towel tucked inside the shorts, etc.?

Yes, as long as such pieces of equipment are still attached to the player at the moment of the hit.

Rule 15.1 - Is a player deemed out if they are hit by a ball thrown by their teammate?

No, unless the ball bounces back after hitting an opponent or a ball, in which case the thrower themselves and their teammates may be hit by the throw.

Rule 15.2 - If a player keeps continuous contact with a live ball (e.g. it is blocked between their legs), what if a whistle blows for a suspension of play or the end of a set before they complete the catch or the ball comes into contact with another player or a dead object?

The player is not deemed out in this specific case (and any subsequent catch of that ball would be invalid as completed after the whistle).

Rules 15.2 & 15.4 - Are rules 15.2 and 15.4 incompatible?

Rule 15.2 pertains to rule 23.1 (1), while rule 15.4 pertains to rule 23.1 (2) and are thus compatible.

Rules 15.2 & 15.4 - When comparing the timing of two eliminations (when 2 players are left in a set or during a tie-breaking set), which one of these 2 timings should be used?

For the purpose of comparing the timing of 2 eliminations, the timing of an elimination by a hit is the instant the player is no longer in contact with the ball that hit them.

Rule 15.3 - If a hit player nevertheless throws a ball (e.g. because they were in their final motion), how should this ball be treated? Does such a throw count as an attempt in regard to rule 18?

If a hit player throws a ball, it is a dead ball that can however be validly caught by the opponent (eliminating the thrower and returning an eliminated player to play). Since it is a dead ball, blocking it is not considered a "block attack" and the ball would remain dead. Such a throw counts as an attempt for the purpose of a "Play n balls" call (but should the hit player be eliminated by the hit; the thrown ball is not counted twice for the "Play n balls").

Rule 15.3 (2) - Is there any leeway regarding the obligation to "keep continuous contact with the ball" such as allowing it to stay within arms reach, for the purpose of this rule?

There is no leeway to this, the catch must be instantaneous and the hit player is eliminated immediately if the ball is no longer in contact with their body (for timing purposes however, the player is considered to have been eliminated when they were hit by the first ball).

Rule 15.4 - What if a whistle blows for a suspension of play or the end of a set happens before the ball makes contact after the initial hit (and before the ball is caught by the player)?

The hit player is eliminated. This also applies at the end of the 3 minutes of tie-breaking sets.

Rule 16.2 - What if a player hits an opponent with a ball without releasing it?

This situation is considered a contact and should be penalized as such (see rule 27.1).

Rule 16.3 - Does this rule prevent issuing a penalty for a ball kicked/spiked at an opponent with enough force to hurt?

No, violently kicking or spiking a ball toward an opponent (regardless if the ball hits them) may still be penalized as unsporting conduct (see rule 36.2).

Rule 16.4 - What of the ball if thrown after play has stopped? Is it just a dead ball which cannot eliminate any player or be caught?

A ball thrown after the play has stopped may not incur any catch or elimination and should be returned to the thrower if this was during a suspension of play. This does not prevent the possible issue of a yellow card for a dangerous or violent avoidable throw.

Rule 16.4 - Does this apply to a ball thrown in joy or in spite after the end of a set?

No, unless the ball is clearly thrown in the direction of an opponent. However, actions clearly made out of spite may still be penalized as unsporting conduct.

Rule 17.2 - Do only the position of the target player when the ball passes them and the position of the target player at the moment the ball was released count toward this rule?

No, any point between these two positions also count toward the application of this rule.

Rule 17.2 - Can there be some leeway to the 1m in situations where the throwing teams would not get a tactical advantage by manipulating the ball distribution? And how much?

This is left to the discretion of the officials, and officials are expected to discuss this together before the start of any championship, tournament or regular season.

Rule 17.2 - Does this rule apply to throws toward any players, or only toward live players (and exiting players who have not yet raised an arm) contrary to the rules wording?

Only a throw toward a player who is live or seems live (e.g. an exiting player who hasn't yet raised an arm) when the thrower starts the final motion of the throw may be a valid attempt.

Rule 17.4 - Should this rule be read "If a player makes an invalid attempt..." instead?

Yes and any attempt which is not valid is automatically invalid.

Rule 17.5 - If the player is pressured away from the ball by the opponent, is this still considered an invalid attempt?

Yes. Taking the ball or rolling it to the neutral zone and leaving it there is considered to be an invalid attempt regardless of any unsuccessful attempt to recover the ball.

Rule 17.7 - Does tossing or rolling a ball toward the opponent's fair territory count as "dropping a ball" for the purpose of this rule?

No, only dropping a ball or tossing/rolling it backward is acceptable to apply this rule.

Rule 18 & Possession - During the opening rush, should the balls be considered to be in a team's possession before they are activated?

No. Balls can only be considered to be in a team's possession once they are activated.

Rule 18 & Possession - Is it right that, unless the ball is stationary in the neutral zone, once a team establishes possession of it, it remains in that team's possession until it is used in an attempt, or otherwise comes into possession of an opponent?

Yes. Once established, the possession of a ball by a team perdures until the ball is used in an attempt, or it otherwise comes into possession of an opponent.

Rule 18 & Possession - What if a ball lies on the center line but out of court?

The referee should then announce this ball as being in possession of the team with the closest retriever to it. From there on, the other team cannot retrieve this ball anymore.

Rule 18.1 - Does "balls in play" always mean 5 balls or is it reduced when one or more balls are outside of the playing area? And if it is reduced, when 2 balls or more are outside of the playing area, isn't it better to wait for these balls to return (eventually by suspending play)?

There are always 5 balls in play so a team has the advantage when they are in possession of 3 or more balls. However if 2 or more balls are outside of the playing area, it may be a good idea for officials to suspend play, especially if a team has 3 balls and the other none.

Rule 18.2 - Is "stationary" meant to be strictly applied or a slowly moving ball (defined as a ball moving at an average walking speed or slower) also count for this rule?

A slowly moving ball (moving at an average person's walking speed or slower) may be considered as "stationary" by the officials for the purpose of this rule, as long as its movement would not lead it to exit the neutral zone.

Rule 18.3 - In the cases of a team with 2 live players left with 5 balls in their possession, or 1 live player left with 4 or 5 balls in their possession, shouldn't the 5 seconds reset if they make as many attempts as they have live players left before any "play n balls" call?

If a team has more than twice as many balls as they have live players left, the 5 seconds before the "Play n balls" call are reset when they have made as many attempts as they have players left.

Rule 18.5 - What are the definitions of “starting a throwing attempt” and “a throwing attempt concluding” in this context (using objective criteria verifiable by an official)?

The following all count as “starting a throwing attempt”:

- having a minimum of 3 players (or all the live players left in the team if below 3), each with one or more balls in hand, and each either being in the neutral zone or moving forward beyond the attack line at a faster pace than an average walking speed;
- having a minimum of 3 players (or all the live players left in the team if below 3), all in the process of a throwing motion or its windup;
- any other combination of actions that leads the officials to believe that the team will throw enough balls to lose the majority (or as many balls as there are live players left in the team if below 3) within 3 seconds after the 5 seconds are up.

The following all count as “a throwing attempt concluding”:

- having fewer than 2 players (or the last live player left in the team if below 2) currently moving forward or in the process of a throwing motion or its windup;
- having performed 2 coordinated fake throws in a row;
- any situation that leads the officials to believe that the team will not throw enough balls to lose the majority (or as many balls as there are live players left in the team if below 3) within 3 seconds from when the 5 seconds were up.

Rule 18.8 - Can/should the officials suspend play to address this specific situation?

The officials can and probably should suspend play as this situation may lead to waste a lot of time. Officials may announce “X players who did not throw is/are out, your choice”.

Rule 18.10 - Does this mean that if a team has, for example, one live player left with 5 balls in their possession, the official should call “play 1 ball” right after each of their throws until they have 2 balls left? Thus effectively rushing the player?

No, after a team has made as many attempts as requested by a “Play n balls” call and still holds possession of the majority of balls, they once again have a new 5 seconds to lose this majority as per rule 18.3.

Rule 20.3 - Is the wrist included or excluded from being part of the ball for this rule?

The wrist is included as being part of the held ball for the purpose of a block.

Rule 21 - What if a whistle blows for a suspension of play or the end of a set happens before the disarmed player regains control of the loose ball?

The disarmed player is eliminated. This also applies at the end of the 3 minutes of tie-breaking sets.

Rule 21 - When comparing the timing of two eliminations (when 2 players are left in a set or during a tie-breaking set), what is the timing of an elimination by being disarmed?

For the purpose of comparing the timing of 2 eliminations, the timing of an elimination by disarming is the instant the loose ball is no longer in contact with the ball that it blocked.

Rule 22.1 - Is it right that a ball thrown by a player that rebounds off an opponent or a ball and is subsequently caught by the same player (or their teammate) does not count as a valid catch?

No, contrary to what is stated in this rule, anyone may also validly catch a live ball once it has rebounded off a ball or an opponent of the thrower. A catch always returns an eliminated teammate to play, if possible. The catch also eliminates the last opponent who either threw or blocked the ball, if there is one.

Rule 22.4 - What are the consequences for using any part of a uniform to catch a live ball?

The player themselves is immediately deemed out and the catch is not valid.

Rule 22.5 - Should “caught” here be understood in the sense of rule 22.1 and 22.2 or be generalized to also include balls caught (or just immobilized) by eliminated players?

A live ball becomes a dead ball once it is caught by a live player. A live ball also becomes a dead ball once it is immobilized by any other player.

Rule 22.6 - Does rule 22.5 also apply to this situation or can a player who was not in contact with the ball that was immobilized by 2 players still catch that ball?

If the ball is immobilized by this contact with 2 players, then it becomes a dead ball.

Rule 22.7 - What is the definition of “to risk causing contact” in this context (using objective criteria verifiable by an official)?

In this context, “to cause or risk contact” means to contact or force out of the way an opposing player who was, at the moment of the jump, static, moving away or sideways from the airborne player, or attempting to retrieve a ball (regardless of whether the airborne player checked the situation before they jumped or not).

Rule 23.2 - What are the consequences of an exiting player not raising their hand? Does it depend on whether this impacted play? Is it different if the player is now outside of the court?

If an exiting player delays or omits raising their hand while exiting the court and it is judged that they impacted play by doing so, they may be issued a warning or a blue card penalty. Once outside of court, the player should keep their hand raised but should not be penalized unless they clearly impacted play by doing so.

Rule 23.3 - What if a player raises their hand seemingly to indicate they are an exiting player when they are not deemed out?

If a player could reasonably believe themselves to have been eliminated, but the officials subsequently call them “Safe”, the player will not be penalized for raising their hand, regardless of any impact on play, as long as they promptly lower their hand thereafter. If a player raises their hand for seemingly no valid reason or delays lowering their hand as previously described, and if by doing so they clearly prevented an opposing player from throwing at them, they will be deemed out by the officials.

Rule 23.3 - What are the consequences for an exiting player not leaving court as quickly as possible over the nearest boundary line? Does it automatically make any impact on play intentional under rule 23.5?

Exiting the court over the nearest boundary line without delay while maintaining a faster pace than an average walking speed will never be considered to be intentionally impacting play. Any other way to exit the court that impacts play will be judged as an intentional impact unless the player shows effort to reduce their impact (e.g. by trying to move out of the way of an opposing player, by ducking to let an opposing player throw, etc.)

Rule 23.4 - Are there any immediate penalties if an exiting player takes a wrong position in the queue or should this only be addressed if this causes a player to return to play out of order? Should officials automatically inform teams that do not have the right queuing orders.

A team will not be penalized for having their out players in the wrong order within the queue area. However, rule 24.5 will still apply nonetheless. The officials may request a team to correct the order in the queue area. A team may request the officials to give them the correct order for their queue. Once a queue order is given by the officials, if players return to play in that order they will not be impacted by rule 24.5 even if the given order is wrong.

Rule 23.5 - Are there some objective criteria verifiable by an official to determine if the exiting player has impacted play (even if these criteria are not exhaustive)?

The following are some indicators that they may be intentionally trying to impact play:

- the exiting player is looking toward the opponent and not trying to get out of their way,
- the exiting player is staying between an opponent and a teammate without ducking,
- the exiting player is making himself as large/tall as possible while exiting,
- the exiting player moves their arm(s) or body toward a live ball while looking at it.

The following are some indicators they have impacted play (intentionally or not):

- the exiting player caught, stopped or deviated a live ball thrown toward their teammate,
- the exiting player prevented an opponent from aiming at their teammate,
- the exiting player prevented an opponent from seeing that a ball was thrown at them,
- the exiting player contacted an opponent or got in their way.

Rule 23.6 - If a player has moved from where they were rendered out (e.g. because they did not realize they were eliminated), is it sufficient for them to drop the ball where they are at the moment they are informed that they are eliminated?

If a player was eliminated in the neutral zone but moved away from there (e.g. because of their initial motion or because they did not realize immediately that they were eliminated), they should make an effort to place all balls in their possession where they were eliminated. If they fail to do so, the officials should either order the ball to be transferred to the opposing team and warn the player (the first time) or penalize them with a blue card (upon repetition).

Rule 23.6 - When an exiting player passes a ball to a teammate, must the teammate be behind the attack line as well?

Yes and the exiting player should receive a blue card. Moreover, if the player receiving the ball gets it in front of the attack line, this ball is treated as if it had been returned by a retriever (it cannot be used for blocking or throwing until it has fully crossed behind the attack line).

Rule 23.7 - Is such a ball a dead ball (and thus does not result in a block attack if blocked)?

A ball thrown by an exiting player is a dead ball that can however be validly caught by the opponent (eliminating the thrower and returning an eliminated player to play). Since it is a dead ball, blocking it is not considered a "block attack" and the ball remains dead.

Rule 23.7 - Does such a throw count as an attempt in regard to rule 18?

Technically yes. However in regard to rule 18.6, the ball should probably have already been counted as thrown following rule 18.9 and must not be counted twice.

Rule 25 - How should an official react if a player erroneously returns to play without a valid catch (e.g. if the catch was later called invalid, or if they just believed they saw a catch)? Does it depend on how much impact their return had on play?

If a player mistakenly re-enters play without being allowed to return via a catch, they will be issued a yellow card penalty, unless they remove themselves from play and take back their position in the queue before their presence had any impact on play. However, the player shall not be penalized if they re-entered play between a seemingly valid catch and the head referee's "No catch" call as long as they promptly remove themselves from play thereafter (any impactful delay in doing so will warrant a blue card penalty).

Rule 25.1 - Does this mean that an exiting player who becomes an entering player must step in the queue area before returning to the court?

Yes.

Rule 25.2 - Is an entering player who does not step onto court over the back line eliminated?

Yes.

Rules 26.1 to 26.4 - Do these rules also apply to loose pieces of clothing or equipment (e.g. a loose shoe, loose goggles, etc.)?

No.

Rule 26.7 - Does this rule also apply to a player balancing themselves on a ball in their possession and placed out of bounds in order to reach a ball lying on the ground?

Yes.

Rule 27.1 - What if the contact is incidental (e.g. the player is looking up to catch a ball and contacts a static opponent, or the player is moving backward and contacts an opponent)?

If the contact is judged to be incidental for the player initiating the contact, they will still be deemed out but should not be penalized further.

Rule 27.1 - If both players initiate the contact, are they both eliminated? What if the contact was incidental (e.g. both players are looking up to catch a ball and contact each other)?

If the contact is judged by the officials to have been initiated by both players, both of them are deemed out and each of them may be penalized further should their action be deemed deliberate and/or dangerous. If the contact is judged to be incidental for both players, none will be deemed out nor penalized.

Rule 27.1 - Does this rule also apply to contacts made outside of the court boundaries (i.e. if 2 or more players jump out of the boundaries while in or near the neutral zone and contact each other)?

Yes.

Rule 28.2 - What is the definition of "enough space" in this context (using objective criteria verifiable by an official)?

A sacrificing player is leaving "enough space" if they do not contact an opposing player and do not force an opposing player to move out of the way to avoid contact before or after landing. Any contact will be ruled as per rule 28.3. Should a contact happen because it was caused by an opposing player, the sacrifice play will not be considered a failed attempt.

Rule 28.3 - What is the definition of “to deliberately cause or risk contact” in this context (using objective criteria verifiable by an official)?

In this context and for the airborne player, “to deliberately cause or risk contact” means to contact or force out of the way an opposing player who was, at the moment of the jump, static, moving away or sideways from the airborne player, or attempting to retrieve a ball (regardless of whether they checked the situation before they jumped or not).

In this context and for the opposing player, “to deliberately cause or risk contact” means to move toward the airborne player at or after the moment of their jump and contact them (unless they could not have been aware of the airborne player).

Rule 28.4 - When exactly are the players deemed out in this case?

The first and second players of a team to attempt a sacrifice play at the same time are deemed out when the second player (or both if they do it simultaneously) crosses the neutral zone line into the opponent's fair territory. Any other player of the team subsequently or simultaneously crossing this neutral zone line are deemed out at the moment they cross it.

Rule 28.4 - If a second sacrifice play starts after the first one has thrown at least one ball but before the first player returns to the neutral zone (if successful), do the eliminations of opponents caused by the first sacrifice play still stand? What if the second sacrifice play starts after the second one is successful instead?

When multiple players of a team perform a sacrifice play at the same time, all balls thrown by the first sacrificing player before the second one crosses the neutral zone line are live and considered as valid attempts.

Rules 28.5.1 & 28.6.1 - Does eliminating an opponent by disarming them also count as a hit for the purpose of these rules?

Yes.

Rule 28.5.1 - When exactly is the player deemed out in this case? When they touch the opponent's fair territory?

When they touch ground outside of their fair territory or the neutral zone.

Rule 28.5.2 - Does this mean that all eliminations of opponents caused by the ball(s) thrown in this case are retroactively canceled?

Yes and the concerned players should be brought back to play if they exited the court.

Rule 28.5.2 - Can such throw(s) nevertheless be caught by an opponent or eliminate a teammate after bouncing off an opposing player?

In this case, all the balls thrown of the sacrificing player are retroactively considered to have been dead balls that can however be validly caught by the opponent (eliminating the thrower and returning an eliminated player to play). Since they are dead balls, blocking them is not considered a “block attack” and the balls remain dead. This may lead the officials to bring back to play players who thought they were eliminated.

Rule 28.6.2 - What does “may not make any valid play” mean in this context?

It means that this player cannot throw a ball, and any catch they make is void.

Rule 28.6.2 - If the player is hit by a ball before reaching the neutral zone but then proceeds to actually catch the ball after returning to the neutral zone, is the catch valid?

No.

Rule 28.6.2 - If the player nevertheless throws a ball before returning to the neutral zone, how should this ball be treated? And are there any penalties for doing so?

A ball thrown in this way is a dead ball that can however be validly caught by the opponent (eliminating the thrower and returning an eliminated player to play). Since it is a dead ball, blocking it is not considered a “block attack” and the ball remains dead.

A blue card penalty should be given to a player throwing a ball this way.

Rule 29 - Is there a list of what counts as a “play” for the purpose of applying these rules?

In this context, a play is any event by which a player may be deemed out, any event by which a player may be allowed to reenter play, any completion of a throw (the moment the ball leaves the hand) or block, and/or any crossing of an attack line or neutral zone line.

Rule 29 - What about plays that occur simultaneously with the whistle blow for the end of a set?

When officials cannot determine if a play happened before or after the whistle blow for the end of a set or for a suspension of play, this play is resolved as if it happened before the whistle blow. In the case of the end of the 3 minutes of a tie breaking set, if this leads to both teams having the same number of players left, play will resume after a reset.

Rule 29 - What if a live ball simultaneously touches a surface or a dead object other than a ball or a player at the same time as it is caught by a player (= trapping)?

In this case, the player is eliminated.

Rule 29.3 - What if this happens during a tie-breaking set?

If simultaneous plays result in all active players being deemed out, the match is suspended, then, after a reset, both teams will resume play with only one live player of their choosing amongst those eliminated by the simultaneous plays.

Rules 30 and 31 - If both a player and a retriever try to take possession of a ball simultaneously, is there a priority and how should the situation be handled?

The first person to touch the ball is considered to have possession of it and it cannot be physically removed from their hands anymore. Should they touch the ball simultaneously, any incidental contact will not be penalized but the retriever must promptly relinquish control of the ball or be given a yellow card if this situation would result in the elimination of the player (e.g. it prevents them from dodging a throw).

Rules 30.2 and 30.3 - What about a ball in possession of an opposing retriever?

Physically removing a ball from the hands of a retriever will also result in a yellow card.

Rule 31.2 - Can a retriever affect a dead ball on court with a ball they are returning?

No but accidentally impacting a dead ball on court should not be penalized.

Rule 31.10 - Does this rule apply to rules up to 31.9 or up to 31.13?

Rule 31.10 applies to rules 31.1 to 31.9, 31.12 and also 4.6.

Rule 31.10 - When should an official give a warning instead of applying a penalty to a retriever?

The officials should give a warning instead of applying a penalty to a retriever when:

- the offense was immediately and spontaneously repaired by the retriever;
- the offense did not impact the distribution of balls between the two teams;
- the offense did not involve a contact with an opposing team member or an officials;
- the offense did not impact the play or give an unfair advantage to their team; and
- the retriever or their team had not yet been warned for such offense in the game.

Rule 31.11 - When should an official transfer 5 balls to the other team instead of giving a card?

The officials should order a transfer of the 5 balls instead of issuing a card when:

- the offense did not involve a contact with an opposing team member or an officials, and
- the offense did not impact the play or give an unfair advantage to their team.

Rule 31.13 (¶ 1) - If rule 31.10 does not apply, should there be a penalty for handing or rolling a ball instead of tossing it, or returning it to a player in front of the attack line, or placing it on court in front of the attack line?

Rule 31.10 does not apply to this rule. Moreover, a retriever may return the ball to play in any way (rolling, tossing, handing, placing, etc.) even in front of the attack line (but not in a way that would transfer the possession of the ball to the opposing team).

Rule 31.13 (¶ 2) - When exactly should a ball cross behind the attack line in order to be used for blocking or throwing?

The ball must cross back behind the attack line if an active player first took control of it beyond the attack line once it was returned by a retriever.

Rule 31.13 (¶ 2) - If such a ball is used for blocking, does it immediately eliminate the player or only counts as a hit?

If such a ball is used for a block, the player is considered to have been hit instead and the rules for a hit player as well as possibly those for a disarmed player apply. Thus, to not be eliminated, the player must catch the ball they blocked and, possibly, regain control of the ball they blocked with, in any order.

Rule 31.13 (¶ 2) - What are the consequences of throwing such a ball at the opponent?

If thrown, such a ball becomes a dead ball that can however be validly caught by the opponent (eliminating the thrower and returning an eliminated player to play). Since it is a dead ball, blocking it is not considered a “block attack” and the ball remains dead.

Rule 32 - Should the eliminations of opponents obtained by an action or a play that is penalized by a card be maintained or canceled? What about the catches made by the offending player(s)?

Any opposing player eliminated by an action that is penalized by a card must be brought back to play. Similarly, any catch performed by the penalized player during this action is canceled. It is left to the officials to evaluate when the action starts and ends.

Rule 32.1 - What are the possible penalties if a penalized player leaves the penalty area? What if there is not enough room in the penalty area for all the penalized players of a team?

Players serving a penalty in the penalty area and who illegally exits the penalty area will first be warned then may receive a yellow card if they persist.

If there is not enough room in the penalty area to fit all the penalized players of a team, remaining close to the penalty area is sufficient.

Rule 32.1 - Do penalized players also have to remain in the penalty area between sets, during suspensions of play or during timeouts? What if they are their team's captain?

Players serving a penalty in the penalty area must not exit the penalty area between sets, during suspensions of play and during timeouts.

A team captain serving a penalty in the penalty area may however leave it during suspensions of play and between sets to address officials and must return to it when their interactions with officials ends.

Rule 32.1 - Can penalized players leave the penalty area at half-time to switch sides and must they remain in the other penalty area during the half-time break?

Players serving a penalty in the penalty area may exit the penalty area during the half-time break but must go into the penalty area on the other side when the second half starts.

Rule 32.2 - If a non-active player receives a penalty, should their team substitute out an active player from the set similarly to rule 34.2.2? Can an out/exiting player be substituted out for this or must they be a live/entering player?

If a non-active player receives a penalty, an active player must substitute out. This player may be an out or exiting player (or a live or entering player).

Rule 32.3 - Does this mean that if a penalty has less than 30s left when a set ends, the penalized player may leave the penalty area early to get ready to start the next set? What if a timeout is called between the two sets?

Should a penalty end between sets, the penalized player may leave the penalty area when their penalty ends or when the officials call "Line up" (whichever comes first). If a timeout is called before the end of the duration of the penalty, the player may not leave the penalty area and will still be in it at the start of the next set.

Rule 32.5 - If a player should be given a second yellow card but is given a red card instead (as per 34.1.2), should all cards received by this player count as a total of 2 or 3 yellow cards for the purpose of this rule?

This only counts as 2 yellow cards for the purpose of this rule.

Rule 33.4 - Each time a set must be forfeited or drawn because of this rule, should the match clock be reduced by 30s (as if the set had effectively started and ended immediately)?

When applying this rule, officials must either reduce the match clock by 30s (without forgetting the eventual penalty clocks) or effectively wait for the full 30s between sets. The rules pertaining to whether a set should be a final set still apply.

Rule 34 - As a team may have injured or absent players and still legally start a set with a reduced number of players, shouldn't there be a rule equivalent to rule 33.4 for yellow cards?

In that case, first any blue cards in the team that cannot field any players is handled as per rule 33.4. Then, if they still cannot field at least 1 player because of yellow cards, they will immediately forfeit a set and both the match and penalty clocks will be reduced by 30s (or the officials may choose to wait the full 30 seconds). This step is repeated as long as the team cannot field at least 1 player.

Rules 34.1.1 and 34.2.1 - Does "match time", in this context, equate to whenever the match clock is running? What about the time before and during a final set or a tie-breaking set when the match clock is not running (as per 9.4.2(1))?

The 5 minutes of a yellow card penalty run whenever the match clock is running and during the final set in each half (but not during the 30s between the final set and the previous one) and any tie-breaking set.

Rule 34.2.1 - Must it initially be an active player who goes to the penalty area or any player? And if a non-active player initially goes to the penalty area, must an active player substitute out?

The player entering the penalty area instead of a retriever must be an active player.
However they may be replaced between sets.

Rule 34.2.1 - In a mixed competition, does the gender of the player who should enter the penalty area in this case depend on the gender of the retriever?

No.

Rule 34.3.2 - Can this occur after a tie-breaking set and thus require to play a second tie-breaking set?

Yes, it is a possibility but this will hopefully never happen.

Rule 35.1 - What happens if the team captain is ejected?

Then their team must immediately choose/elect a new team captain and inform the officials of who it is. This player must now be clearly identifiable as per rule 6.3.

Rule 35.1.1 - Can an ejected player remain within the playing area?

No, once ejected they must leave the playing area.

Rule 35.1.2 - If they are not sent to the penalty box, does an ejected player for a red card still count as an active player? Otherwise, does it mean that if a team has a player with a red card and then a player with a blue/yellow card, they can still start the set with 5 players on court?

No, they do not count as an active player. Instead, the number of active players in a set for their team is reduced to a maximum of 5 for the remainder of the match.

Rule 35.1.2 - How is this rule impacted in a mixed gender match?

In a mixed gender match, the maximum number of active players of the gender of the ejected players is reduced by 1 for their team for the remainder of the match.

Rule 35.2 - Can this occur after the match has finished but before the match officials have signed the match sheet, similarly to rule 34.3.2?

Yes, it is a possibility but this will hopefully never happen.

Rule 36.2 - What is the recommended card colour for each of the given examples (knowing that this may be upgraded/downgraded depending on how the officials perceive the situation)?

This is left to the discretion of the officials, and officials are expected to discuss this together before the start of any championship, tournament or regular season.

Rule 36.2(4) - Does this rule apply if the thrower was rendered out or the target player, or both?

It applies to both situations.

Rule 36.2(8) - Does this apply to live players attempting to distract other players?

No.

Rule 36.2(10) - Does this include unfairly wasting time during a set (e.g. by throwing balls directly outside of the playing area)?

Yes.

Rule 37 - How should a team request a challenge in practice?

During the set, a team leader or a team captain may grab the attention of the head referees then signal a T with their arms and/or call "Challenge". Between sets, a team leader or a team captain must go to a head referee and request the challenge verbally and explicitly.

Rule 37.1 - If a team makes a 3rd challenge in the game, should this simply be ignored, or should this lead to a penalty? What if play was mistakenly suspended because of this illegal challenge?

The third challenge made by a team will be replied to with a warning. Any subsequent request by this team may be penalized by a team yellow card.

If play is mistakenly stopped for an illegal challenge, the officials will end it immediately with a whistle and a "Backline" call, issue a warning or a team yellow card to the offending team, and then resume play.

Rule 37.2 - If someone other than a team leader or the captain makes a challenge can a simple explanation of who must make it suffice, or should this lead to a warning/penalty?

Between sets, if anyone besides a team leader or the team captain requests a challenge, the request will not be granted and they will be informed of who may make such request. During a set, if anyone besides a team leader or the team captain requests a challenge, the officials may deny it by calling "Denied" and any further insistence for the request by this team member or another one not authorized to make such request may be penalized with a blue card, or a yellow card upon repetition.

Rule 37.3 - Is it correct that the first part of this rule (before the comma) applies to challenges about an incorrect application of a rule during a set, while the second part applies only to challenges about an incorrect application of a rule before, between or after sets?

Yes.

Rule 37.3 - What does "immediately" mean in this context and with regard to the end of a set?

A challenge for a misapplication of the rules made during a suspension of play must be made before play resumes. A challenge for a misapplication of the rules must be made during the next advantage of the requesting team following the misapplication. Challenges for an ineligible or ejected player taking part in a set may be requested at any time.

Rule 37.4 - Does this include some potentially verifiable rule violations that were not noticed by the officials, such as a player returning to play out of order for example?

Yes.

Rule 38.4 - Does this rule apply differently for a mixed competition?

For a mixed competition, it is the first player in the queue of the same gender as the player being substituted out who is allowed to enter play.

Rule 38.6 - Does this rule allow the officials to select the replacement player?

No.

Rule 38.7 - Does this mean that if any treatment is needed (even just applying a bandaid), the player must be substituted?

No, if a treatment may be administered in less than 30 seconds, then the player does not have to be substituted.

Rule 39 - Should this be treated in the same way as other injuries regarding substitution?

If the participant is found bleeding, yes.

If it is only blood that is discovered on their uniform, they may be allowed to quickly replace the stained clothing or must be substituted if they cannot do so promptly.

Rule 40.4 - Are the head referees also the final decision-makers for any situations that might present themselves which are not covered by the present rules.

Yes, but in this case they must consistently apply the same decision throughout the match should the same situation come up again. Additionally they should refer it to the event coordinator after the match.

Rule 40.9 - Are the head referees also allowed to adjust the match and set clock?

Yes, but only to add remaining time to these clocks (unless a clock had a technical issue and did not start properly).

Rule 40.13 - Is it correct that not saying or indicating anything because the head referees believed a player to be "safe" also counts as a "call" for the purpose of this rule?

Yes.

Rule 40.13 - What is the definition of "period of inactivity" in this context (using objective criteria verifiable by an official)?

A "period of inactivity" is a moment of at least a few seconds in the game when no ball is live or being thrown and no players are actively putting a pressure on the other team by threatening to throw at them. A head referee wishing to change their call must do so before the end of such a period or before the next coordinated throwing attempt by either team (whichever comes first).

Rule 40.13 - Should the head referees change their call and render a player out, can they bring back to court the opponents eliminated by this player between the event that should have rendered this player out and the change of their call?

Yes.

Rules 42 & 43 - Can the roles of scorekeeper and timekeeper be assumed by the same person?

Yes.

Rule 42.3 - Should "timeout" be read as "suspension of play" in this rule?

Yes.

Rule 43 - Is the timekeeper also responsible for keeping track of the duration of penalties for yellow cards and signaling penalized players they may join the queue at the end of their penalty?

Yes.

Diagrams - Is the 15x22m a fixed size for the playing area, indicating where to place the barriers or netting, or is it a minimum size?

It is the minimum size to fit the court, the free space, the queue area, the penalty area and the substitution area.

Question - Who is primarily responsible for declaring that a player was hit by a ball? The hit player themselves or the officials?

Players are responsible to declare themselves hit without waiting for an official to call them out. The officials may also declare players as safe or hit depending on whether the ball that hit them was dead before or not.

Question - Are players obligated to declare themselves as an exiting player if they are deemed out by a rule without waiting for the officials to call them out?

Yes, if they know they are hit by a live ball, that a ball they threw was validly caught or that they were out of bounds, or that they were otherwise eliminated, players must declare themselves as exiting players by raising their hand over their head.

Question - If a player leaves the court because they believe they were eliminated by a ball but the ball was actually never made live or had touched a dead object before the hit, can the officials bring the player back into play?

Yes, a head referee may bring back a player to court by calling them "Safe" and players should never be penalized for their honesty. However, the head referee must pay attention to rule 40.13 when doing so and may have to suspend play to rectify a situation.

Question - If a normal set starts with less than 3 minutes left on the match clock and (near the end of the set) the last live player in a team is hit and the ball rebounds into the air and then the whistle for the end of the set is blown before they catch the ball and before the ball touches anything else, should a final set be played as the player was hit before the whistle? (A similar case could be made for disarming)

In this very specific case, it is considered that the set has ended at the end of its maximum duration and there will not be a final set in the half.

Similarly, if a set starts with 5 minutes left on the match clock and a similar situation happens, the set is considered to have ended at the end of its maximum duration and thus the next set will be the final set of the half.