

GOALBALL was introduced as a medal event at the 1976 Paralympic Games in Toronto after its success as a demonstration event at the Heidelberg 1972 Paralympic Games. However, the sport dates back to 1946 when it was created by Austrian Hans Lorenzen and German Sett Reindle as a way to rehabilitate WWII veterans who had lost their vision. It is now played by over 120 countries throughout the world and is one of the Paralympic sports that have no Olympic equivalent.

BASIC RULES

The purpose of the game is for one player on offense to roll the ball across the opponent's goal line while the other team attempts to prevent this from happening by diving on the ground and blocking the oncoming throw. While there are three traditional defending positions, teams will frequently move and switch spots to create deception. Player and ball movement on offense is also an essential strategy for high-level teams. Elite goalball athletes throw the ball in excess of 40 miles per hour and can throw a variety of shots including different smooth, skipping, and bouncing shots. A different spin is also put on the ball to create different movements. Goalball athletes will tell you that their sport is the only full-contact team sport for athletes who are blind or visually impaired.

To maintain an increased rate of play, a team must throw the ball across the centerline of the court within 10 seconds of the team's first defensive contact with the ball. In a regulation 24-minute match, each team typically throws between 90-100 times.

Common penalties in goalball are high ball, long ball, 10-second penalty, eyeshade penalty, illegal coaching, and team noise penalty. When a penalty is committed, the offending team must defend one shot with only one defender on the court.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment needed for the sport includes one goalball (24-25cm in diameter, 75.5cm in circumference, 1.250kg in weight, eight sound holes, 2pcs bells inside), eyeshades which completely block all vision, elbow pads, and knee pads.

Goalball courts are 18m long by 9m wide (59 ft X 29.5 ft) and played on a gymnasium floor or similar smooth surface. The court is divided every 3m (9.8 ft) along its length to make six areas. All lines will be marked with tape, and the tape will have string underneath to assist with player orientation. The goals will extend across each end of the court, 9m (29.5 ft) across and 1.3m (4.2 ft) high.

GETTING STARTED

We encourage you to get started by connecting with a local adaptive sports organization for goalball or to get involved in your local USABA goalball club. To find a list of clubs in your area, please visit

<https://www.usaba.org/membership/usaba-sports-clubs/>.

For more information on the sport of Goalball, please visit <https://www.usaba.org/>.

PARALYMPIC ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

- Visual Impairment

PARALYMPIC CLASSIFICATIONS

The qualifying categories are B1, B2 and B3. All athletes must be legally blind and officially classified.

All athletes must wear eyeshades so that no light is visible. This maintains an equal playing field for all.

PARALYMPIC ROSTERS

Goalball teams may bring up to six athletes and three staff to a competition, but only three athletes are allowed to play at one time.

ABOUT THE GOALBALL

The ball has two metal bells inside which create an audible cue for the athletes. Because goalball is an auditory sport, spectators must remain silent while the ball is in play. This creates a unique and exciting atmosphere for the spectators, who must hold all applause until a goal or other stoppage in play.

PARALYMPIC SCORING

- A goal is scored when the ball completely crosses the goal line during play.
- The team with the most goals at the end of time will be the winner.
- If at any time during the game one team leads the other team by 10 goals, the game will be awarded to the team in the lead.